CENSUS OF INDIA, 1901

VOL. IV.

ASSAM

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PART I.—REPORT.

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1901.

VOLUME IV.

ASSAM.

PART I.

REPORT.

BY

B C ALLEN, B A,

OF THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE,

SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS IN ASSAM.

SHILLONG

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INTRODUCTION

THE third General Census of the Province was taken on the night of March 1st 1901 In the plains districts and the North Lushai Hills, the whole of the country had been divided up into blocks containing on the average about 46 houses, each of which was placed in charge of an Enumerator This individual had been carefully trained beforehand in the rules for filling up the schedule, and had recorded all the particulars for the persons in his block during February The entries were tested and, when necessary, corrected by the superior census officers, and on March 1st all that remained to be done was to bring the record up to date by striking out the names of those who had left the house or had died, and entering the necessary particulars for newly-born infants and persons who had arrived subsequent to the preliminary enumeration Special arrangements were made for the census of boats and steamers, and on roads where there is much night traffic patrols were posted to ensure that no travellers were overlooked In the North Cachar and Mikir Hills, the number of literate persons is so small, the villages are so scattered, and travelling after dark through the jungles is so dangerous, that it was impossible to form blocks which could be properly tested by the enumerator during the night. This officer was, therefore, obliged to take up his position on March 1st at some central village in his block and correct his record on the following day in the light of the information received from the headmen who came in from the different hamlets and reported the changes that had taken place since his last visit In the Naga, Khasi and Jaintia, and Garo Hills and in the hills to the east of Manipur, it was impossible to hold a synchronous census, and the enumeration was extended over a period ranging from ten days to six weeks

The taking of the Census

2 On the morning of March 2nd the enumerators assembled at the various centres prescribed for them, and prepared abstracts, showing the total number of houses and of males and females in their blocks Totals for circles and charges were then struck and the charge summaries added together to ascertain the district totals, which were telegraphed to the Census Commissioner The average time occupied by these operations in each district was 5½ days, and the longest time taken in any district was only 8 days, but, though the work was pushed on with the greatest rapidity, accuracy was not sacrificed to speed, and the figures finally worked out only differed by 6 in 10,000 from those originally reported

Preparation of the provisional totals

3 As soon as the provisional totals had been compiled, the enumeration books were sent to the district or subdivisional stations, and the entries for each individual were there copied on to a little slip of paper These slips were of different colours, representing the main religions of the province for Hindus a brown slip was used, for Muhammadans a slip of unbleached paper, while for Christians red, for Animistic tribes green, and for 'Others' yellow was the colour selected On each slip was printed a symbol indicating sex and civil condition, *e g*, for a married man the symbol was ■ and for a married woman □, so that no entries had to be made for religion, sex, and civil condition Symbols were also used for the commonest class of entries The great majority of people are born in the

Compilation of the results

district in which th y are enumerated and for such persons instead of writing out the name of the district in full, a tick was given while in the column for occupation persons who cultivate their own land (the ordinary occupation of the Assamese raiyat) were indicated by the sign + cultivating tenants by 8 and garden coolies by 6. Abbreviations were also sanctioned for the castes most strongly represented in the province. Each book and each individual in the book were serially numbered, and at the top of each slip the copyist entered the serial number of the charge, the number of the book and the number of the individual so that reference could be made at any time without difficulty to the original record. The copyists worked in gangs under checkers, who compared the entries on the slips with the enumeration books, and as each book was finished the slips were sorted by sex and compared with the abstracts which had been originally prepared by the enumerators The slips cost Rs. 22 4 10 per lakh if plain and Rs. 30-11 1 if coloured, and the total average cost of copying in the district offices, excluding Aijal where the conditions are abnormal was Re. 1 3 11 per thousand, the rate varying between Re 1 14 10 and Re. 0-8-11

Slip-sorting.

4 The slips when ready were despatched to the central office at Gauhati, where they were sorted under my personal supervision The first step in the process was to count the contents of each bundle to make sure that we had actually received the number shown in the letter of advice and with this count was combined a simple sorting into three heaps containing (*a*) those born in the district and speaking the vernacular most prevalent there (*b*) those born in the district who did not speak the local vernacular and (*c*) those born outside the district. The slips were then made up into boxes containing from twenty to twenty five thousand units and handed over to muharrirs, who subjected them to the various sorting processes required for the preparation of the final tables. For Table VII for instance (Civil Condition by religion sex and age) all that was required was to sort the slips for each religion into seventeen pigeon holes (one for each of the prescribed age periods) and to re-sort the contents of each pigeon hole into three heaps, for single married and widowed ; but other tables, such as XI (birth place) XIII (caste) and XV (occupation) could not be so easily disposed of

Nearly 13 per cent of the population of Assam were born outside the province, and many of these persons had returned the name of a village or thana instead of the district in which they were born. The slips were first sorted by provinces and the provinces by districts, but the average muharrir whose knowledge of geography was of the most elementary character often had considerable difficulty in determining to what province or country any particular slip belonged. The foreign castes were also a great source of trouble as in many cases the number of names returned was so large that the sorting became a very complicated matter In one box containing less than 12 000 Hindus slips the sorter found 460 different names ; and, though it was the rule to begin by sorting the slips for caste alphabetically and then to re-sort each letter of the alphabet it was impossible, even by this expedient to sweep all obstacles out of the muharrir's path as no less than 57 different names began with the letter K and to sort a bundle of slips into 57 heaps is I need hardly say a very tedious business.

Considerable difficulty was also experienced with the occupation table, as not only are there many different kinds of work but there are also many different ways of describing the same thing ; and as it was not possible to allow men of the sorter class discretion to classify the entries made on the slips, they were compelled to sort and enter each functional name separately even in those not infrequent cases when one occupation was described by several different names.

The muharrirs worked in gangs of six or eight under a supervisor who checked their work by running through the bundles of slips after they had been sorted, and seeing for instance that married persons had not been mixed with unmarried, or

slips of one caste or age period with those of another The duties imposed upon these men were of a very responsible character, and the scarcity of men who were really qualified for these appointments was one of the most serious difficulties of census administration

Compilation

5 The conclusion of the slip-sorting left the figures for the province arranged in the form of the final tables in units of twenty to twenty-five thousand, and from these units the totals for subdivisions and districts had to be compiled The caste, language and birth-place returns were examined, synonymous terms were amalgamated, and the occupations entered on the sorter's tickets were classified under the appropriate groups in the scheme prescribed by the Census Commissioner

This part of the work gave comparatively little trouble, but as it could only be entrusted to clerks in whom confidence could be placed, and as it is not easy to meet with people of this class in Assam who have leisure to take up census work, some months elapsed before it was brought to a conclusion Had the necessity arisen, compilation could have been pushed through more rapidly by the simple expedient of increasing the number of clerks employed upon the work, but this could hardly have been done without borrowing men from other offices—a proceeding which the circumstances did not seem to warrant It cannot, however, I think, be considered that the preparation of the Imperial tables was unduly delayed, as the first was ready by the beginning of September and the last by the middle of December, or within nine and a half months from the date on which the actual census was taken

The cost of the Census.

6 The census accounts have been prepared in two ways—(*a*) to show the actual cost to Government, and (*b*) to show the departmental cost Under system (*a*) the actual expenditure incurred has been entered in the accounts, *e g*, if a mandal was temporarily lent to the census office and no substitute was taken in his place, his deputation allowance only was entered in the accounts, but under the second system the mandal's pay, as well as his deputation allowance, was charged against the census, though he would have drawn his pay from Government whether he had gone to the census office or not It is the first set of accounts which shows the actual cost to Government of the census, and the second set of figures in this province, at any rate, are liable to give a somewhat misleading impression as to the actual expenditure incurred The total cost of the census, excluding the printing of the report, was Rs 62,826, or Rs 10-12-1 per 1,000 of the population It is impossible, however, to compare the figures under the head of superintendence at the last two enumerations, as there has been a difference in the arrangement of the accounts, and if the charges for superintendence (charges, I would point out, over which the Superintendent of Census Operations can exercise no control, and with regard to which he can practise no economy) and the expenditure incurred on the printing of the report are deducted on both occasions, the rate per 1,000 is Rs 7-11-10 for the present census and Rs 9-11-7 for that of 1890-92

The departmental cost to which I have referred above was Rs 91,964

Comparison between the slip-sorting system and the tabulating machine

7 A comparison between the slip system, which has now been employed for the first time in India, and the electric tabulating machine, which is its counterpart in the new world, is not without interest, as it has been claimed for this machine that it works more quickly, more accurately, and more cheaply than any non-mechanical process The rapidity with which the figures can be compiled by this means depends largely upon the number of machines used, but the ordinary census budget would not allow of their purchase in large numbers, and in Austria, where only twelve were employed, the tabulation of 24 millions of people took over two years to complete At the Cuban census, where economy seems to have been a secondary consideration,

1 572 000 people were tabulated by the machines in five months ; but even this is not a record with which the Indian slip system need fear comparison.

As to accuracy the machine itself must, I suppose, be presumed to be free from any liability to err ; but the accuracy of the final tables depends upon the accuracy with which the particulars about each individual have been punched upon a card by the abstracting staff and the card employed is of such a complicated character that there must I think be an appreciable risk of the hole being punched in the wrong place. But it is when we come to consider the question of expense that the most serious doubts arise as to the superiority of the machine over the human being

The figures for Cuba were tabulated at a contract rate of 3½ cents for each person, which taking the dollar as equivalent to three rupees, works out to a rate of Rs. 105 per thousand of population. It is a little difficult to ascertain exactly what items of expenditure in Assam should be charged to tabulation, under which term I include slip-copying, slip-sorting and compilation but the total cost to Government for the slips and the staff employed on these processes was only Rs. 28 8 1 or Rs. 4 11-3 per thousand.

It is true that clerical labour is much cheaper in India than in Europe, but even if we assume that the charges under that head in England would be five times what they are in Assam, the cost of compilation by the slip system would still be only one-fifth of the rate which was paid in Cuba ; and we must not lose sight of the fact that, though the lowest grade of Indian muharrir is cheap he is also unreliable and slow and that the higher paid English clerk would get through two or three times the amount of work in the same time. Comparisons between India and Europe are of course liable to be misleading, but as far as economy and speed are concerned, there seem grounds for supposing that the slip copying and sorting clerk may challenge comparison with the machine, and it is by no means certain whether even in accuracy he is its inferior

Conclusion.

8 My acknowledgments, I feel, are due to all District and Subdivisional Officers and their staff as upon them fell the burden of making and supervising the arrangements for the actual enumeration of the people, and the copying of the slips. Where all have done so well, it is scarcely possible to single out individuals but the work of Major Gordon in Kamrup, Captain Cole in Darrang, Mr Gruning in Nowgong and Mr Reid in Lakhimpur and of Mr Hart and Mr Majid, the Subdivisional Officers of South Sylhet and Habiganj seems to call for special mention.

It is only right, too to place on record my appreciation of the services of Babu Tarim Charan Nandi, who acted as Superintendent of my office from the inception of the operations, and of Babu Padma Nath Bhattacharyya, my gazetted assistant. Both of these officers were models of industry and laboured unceasingly during the time that the slips were being sorted while they proved of the greatest assistance in the troublesome task of training and managing the large staff of census muharrirs. I have also to express my thanks to Mr Chalmers Superintendent of Government Printing, Bengal, and to Mr Conyngham Francis and the staff of the Assam Secretariat Printing Office, for their hearty co-operation in all matters where census was concerned.

B C ALLEN

Superintendent of Census Operations Assam.

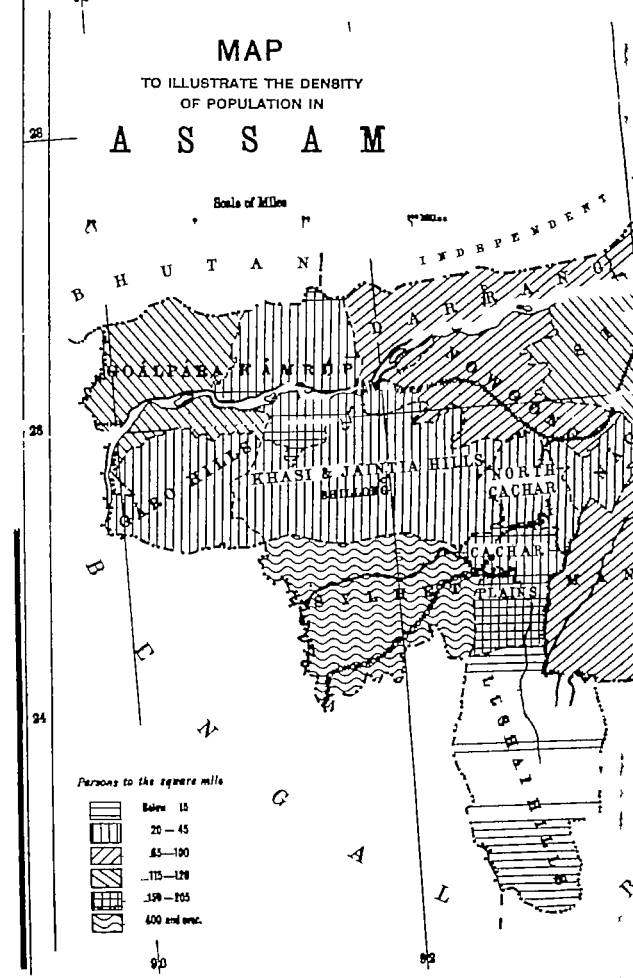
Shillong

February 19th 902

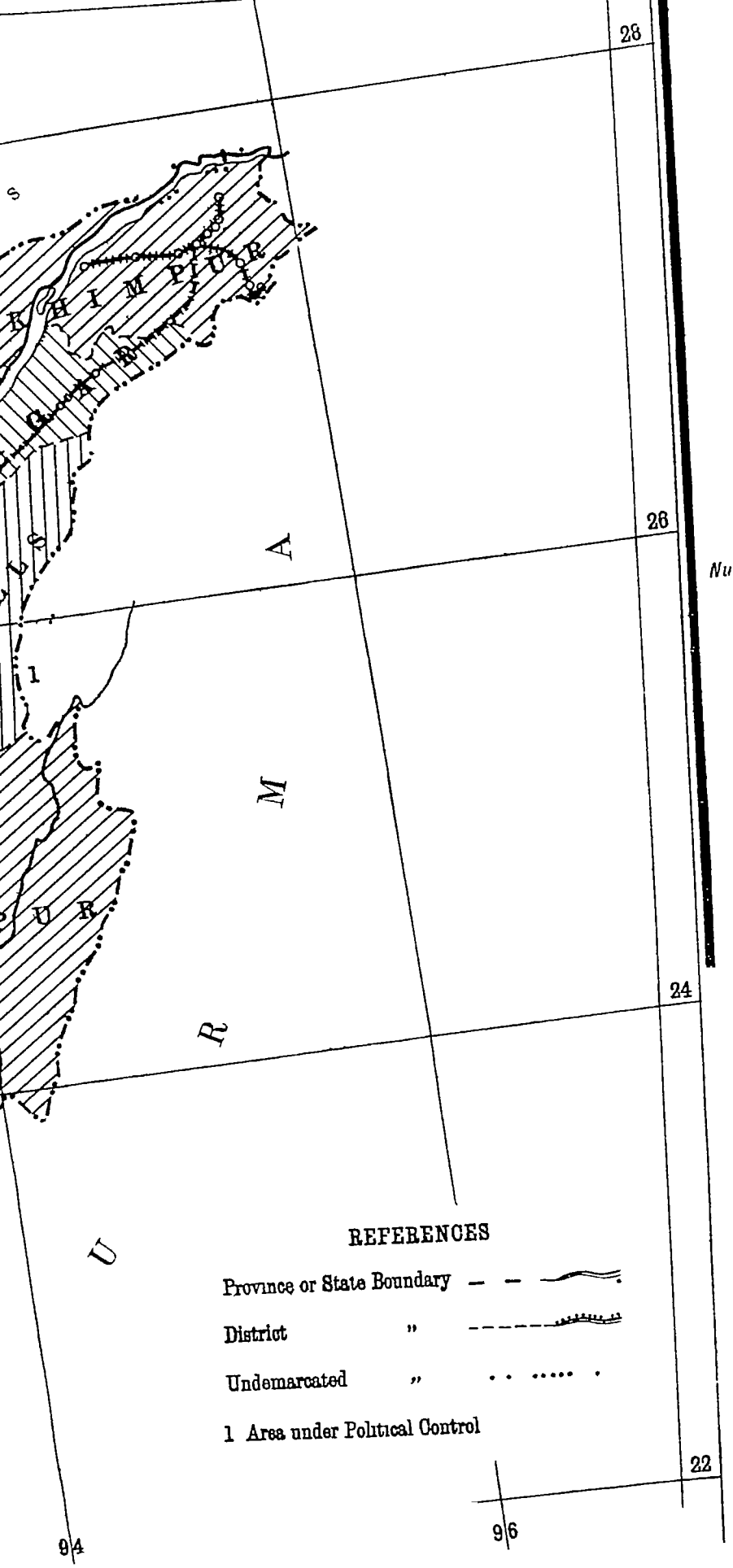
MAP

TO ILLUSTRATE THE DENSITY
OF POPULATION IN

A S S A M



Exterior Eastern Boundary in accordance with Trace recd. with The Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam's Letter No. 1550 Misc. dated 24th January 1907.



REFERENCE

Number of persons per sq mile—

Lushai Hills	11
North Cachar	24
Nága Hills	33
Khási and Jaintia Hills	34
Gáro Hills	44
Nowgong	68
Manipur	87
Lakhimpur	88
Darrang	99
Goálpara	117
Sibságar	120
Kámrúp	153
Cachar Plains	201
Sylhet	412

Photo S I. O, Calcutta.

REPORT

ON

THE CENSUS OF ASSAM, 1901.

CHAPTER I

STATISTICS OF AREA AND POPULATION

Area populati

Genera descripti

ALL the earliest references to Assam point to the settlement of a considerable Aryan colony, at any rate in the lower portion of the valley of the Brahmaputra, at a very early period One of the first Kings of Kamrup is said to have taken part in the war of the Pandavas, and the existence of the Kalita caste, the highest pure Assamese caste after the Brahman, is explained by the theory that at the time of the Aryan colonization of Assam the differentiation of caste by occupation was unknown, but in the course of time, the Hindu dynasties were overthrown, and the sovereignty of the valley passed to races of Mongolian origin, the Koch ruling in Lower, and the Chutiya in Upper Assam Both of these kingdoms were, however, overrun and conquered by the Ahoms, a Shan tribe who entered the province in the thirteenth century and had become the dominant power by the middle of the sixteenth Under their rule the country enjoyed no small measure of prosperity, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a dispute between two rivals for the throne, one of whom called in the Burmese to his aid, and from that time till the province was annexed by the British Government, Assam was a prey to civil war, invasion and anarchy The troubles through which the country passed have left marks which even at the present day have not been obliterated In the words of Robinson—"Large tracts, once inhabited by a happy and numerous population, had been converted into extensive and unwholesome jungles, and ceased not only to be the haunts of man, but had become hostile to human life"—and though the population was still fairly dense round the seats of Government at Gauhati and Jorhat, in Tezpur, Nowgong, and Lakhimpur the effects of the prolonged disorder were only too plainly to be seen When, however, it was discovered that tea would pay, and pay most handsomely, at the upper end of the valley, gardens were opened out in the midst of the jungle and coolies imported in thousands, with the result that at each successive census Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, and the sadr subdivision of Darrang have shown a marked development in which the agricultural districts of Lower Assam have not shared. The condition of affairs which we now find in the Valley of the Brahmaputra as the result of all these changes is an Aryan Hindu population, surrounded, and to some extent intermingled, with semi-Hinduized tribes of Mongolian origin, upon which in Upper and Central Assam has been superimposed a large deposit of coolie castes from Bengal, the North-West and the Central Provinces, while population, which originally was densest in the west in consequence of the depredations of the Burmese, is now being attracted back to the eastern end of the valley by the magnet of British capital

Historical Summary Assam Proper

2 Of the early history of Sylhet and Cachar little is known Sylhet was conquered by the Muhammadans in the fourteenth century and passed into the hands of the East India Company with the rest of Bengal in 1765 The greater portion of the district is permanently settled, but the settlement, instead of being made with the chaudries or zamindars, was offered direct to all well-to-do raiyats—a fact which no doubt largely accounts for the independence which is a marked characteristic of the natives of this district Cachar is believed to have been originally a province of the Tipperah Raja and to have been ceded to the Kachari King, who had his capital at Maibong, on the northern side of the Assam range, on the occasion of his marriage to a Tipperah Princess. At the beginning of the century the Manipuris and Burmese both endeavoured to conquer the district, and, to put an end to the anarchy which prevailed, it was annexed by the British on the death of the last Kachari Raja without heirs Cachar has been

The Surma Valley

a and largely colonized from Sylhet and by the coolies who have come up to the numerous pulation. gardens which have been opened there.

General descriptions.

8 The tribes inhabiting the Assam range are too uncivilized to have preserved anything in the way of historical records The Garos, who live to the west are a rude people, who used to trouble the peace of the neighbouring districts by raids in quest of heads or prisoners, and, as the punitive expeditions sent into the hills only produced a temporary effect a post was established under a European officer on Tura Hill in 1866, but the district was not finally pacified till 1873 The Khasi Hills were conquered in 1833 but the native rulers were left for the most part in possession of their territory and as no attempt has been made to interfere with them in any way they have acquiesced in our occupation of small portions of the country for hill stations. The inhabitants of the Jaintia Hills which lapsed to us in 1835 were, however subjected to a moderate system of taxation an innovation against which they protested by rising in open rebellion in 1860 and 1862, but the revolt was thoroughly stamped out, and since that date the peace of the district has not been disturbed The Naga and Lushai Hills were, like the Garo Hills, occupied in order to protect the plains from the raids of the hillmen. The Nagas showed extraordinary persistence in their resistance to our arms and no less than three Political Officers came to a violent end two being killed by the hillmen and one being accidentally shot by his own sentry and it was not till 1881 that the district was finally pacified The last expedition into North Lushai was that of 1889-90, and since then the inhabitants have given no trouble and the district is rapidly being civilized.

The Hill districts.

4 The principal characteristics of the climate of Assam are coolness and humidity The average rainfall for the province during the past ten years has been 113 inches and such a thing as famine or anything approaching a serious failure of crops is unknown. The spring rains are much heavier than in other parts of India, and keep the temperature at a lower level than that prevailing in Hindostan. The Surma Valley is generally supposed to be healthier than Assam Proper which has certainly during the past decade done much to maintain the reputation it earned at the beginning of the century for extreme insalubrity but it is only in Central and Lower Assam that public health has been exceptionally bad and the open plains of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur still continue to be well adapted for the habitation both of Europeans and Natives.

Climate.

5. The territory which has been placed under the administration of the Chief Commissioner of Assam consists of two valleys, separated from one another by a wall of hills which project towards the delta of Bengal from the mountain system of Upper Burma and Western China. To the north it is bounded by the Himalayas the eastern end of the Brahmaputra Valley is closed by the mountain ranges which form an effectual barrier to our intercourse with China while the Surma Valley is imbedded in the hills that separate the district of Cachar from the Native State of Manipur and form part of the same system as the Lushai and Tipperah ranges, which constitute the southern boundary of the province. Assam therefore, falls into three natural divisions—the Surma Valley the Valley of the Brahmaputra and the hill districts, *i.e* the hills of the Assam range, with the Lushai Hills which lie to the south of Cachar and these three divisions differ so greatly in their ethnological and economical conditions that separate totals are given for them in the census tables

Geographical divisions.

6. The Assam Valley is an alluvial plain, about 450 miles long, with an average width of fifty miles, into th centre of which the Mikir Hills abut being separated from the remainder of the hill system by the unhealthy valleys of the Dhansiri and the Lumding, which till lately were one unbroken sheet of tree forest, but have recently been pierced by the Assam-Bengal Railway Down the centre of the valley flows the Brahmaputra, but, owing to the rapidity of its current, it does not, in this the upper part of its course, exercise the fertilizing influence of the Nile, the Ganges and other great rivers.* It is true that its waters contain, especially in the rainy season, a large quantity of matter in suspension, but it is the sand which is deposited, while the silt is carried on till the slackening of the current allows it to settle down and fertilize the plains of Bengal. In Assam the river flows between sandy banks, covered with dense jungle grass, the home of wild buffalo, rhinoceros, and other large game, and from the decks of the river steamers few signs of population or cultivation can be seen A few miles inland however the appearance of the country changes, and rice fields or tea gardens take the place of the riverain

The Assam Valley

* This view is not universally accepted and it is held by some that the *chars* of Upper Assam, though sandy are fertile.

swamps, though in nearly every part of the valley, even away from the river, there are long stretches of grass jungle and tree forest still awaiting settlement.

Area and population

General description

The Brahmaputra Valley, again, falls into three divisions,—Goalpara, which has many points in common with Bengal, Bengali being the prevailing language and the greater part of the district being permanently settled, Central Assam, consisting of Kamrup, Nowgong, and the Mangaldai subdivision of Darrang, which resemble one another, in that they formerly contained a large agricultural population, which has now been much reduced by *kalá-ázár* and the floods which followed the great earthquake of 1897, but have not proved particularly suitable for the cultivation of tea, and Upper Assam, consisting of Tezpur sadr and the Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts, in which the tea industry has attained a position of great importance In Sibsagar, where the last Assam Raja held his court, there is a considerable Assamese population, but in Tezpur and Lakhimpur the proportion of foreigners, even in the villages, is very large

The Hill districts

7. The hill districts take their names from the tribes by which they are inhabited. To the west lie the Garo Hills, a succession of low ranges covered with bamboo jungle and tree forest, but when we reach the Khasi Hills, the character of the country changes, and we find uplands and high plateaux, where rounded hills covered with short grass or patches of pine forest suggest rather the Sussex downs or the Devon moors, than one of the most easterly outposts of the Indian Empire Towards North Cachar the level again falls, but rises when the Naga Hills are reached to nearly 10,000 feet in the Japvo peak, which overhangs Kohima The Naga Hills extend geographically eastwards to the Patkoi, but the Dikkhu is our frontier for political purposes, Government resolutely declining to undertake the thankless and costly task of keeping order amongst the tribes living on the further side of this river The Lushai Hills are situated south of Cachar, and present few features of interest, they are covered with dense masses of bamboo jungle, and the population supported by them is extraordinarily sparse

The Surma Valley

8. The Surma Valley consists of two districts only—Sylhet, which differs but little from the Eastern Bengal districts from which it was separated in 1874, when Assam was formed into a separate province, and Cachar, which came under British rule in 1832, in consequence of the death of the native Raja, Gobind Chandra, without heirs Sylhet is a broad and densely-cultivated plain, except in the extreme north, where the enormous rainfall converts many square miles of land into one huge lake during the rains, and in the south, where low ranges of bamboo-covered hills project from the Tipperah State In spite of the high rainfall, the district in normal years is far from unhealthy, and the population has gone on steadily increasing Cachar is a comparatively small district, surrounded by hills, it contains a large number of tea gardens, and the population has been increasing rapidly in recent years, owing to immigration from Sylhet, and the settlement of time-expired coolies

Previous censuses

9. Imperial Table II (Variation in the population) shows the increase or decrease that has occurred in each district since 1872, and it is, therefore, necessary to refer briefly to these earlier enumerations, and to consider the extent to which their figures can be accepted as correct The census of 1872 was non-synchronous In Goalpara it was taken during the first half of February, in Kamrup and Nowgong in November 1871, in Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the work began in November, and in the first two districts was finished before the end of the year, but in Lakhimpur lingered on till the end of February 1872 In Sylhet it was carried out in the week ending January 22nd, but in Cachar it was spread over two months,—from March 10th to May 9th The mere fact that the people of the province were not all counted on the same day would tend to produce inaccuracy in the returns, for, though the resident population would be enumerated fairly correctly, travellers by road and boat would in all probability be omitted, and visitors might either be overlooked or counted twice over The inexperience of the district staff was a further difficulty No general census had been taken before, and the local officers could, therefore, have no clear idea of the difficulties with which they would be confronted, or of the best means by which they could be overcome Mr Luttman-Johnson, Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, in his report on the census of 1881, openly expressed his distrust of the previous enumeration —"In 1872 the first regular census was taken. I never met a man other than an official, I never met a man who knew a man other than officials, who remembered the 1872 census I have been all over the district, and my first enquiry was about the census of 1872 I always get one answer—absolute denial that such an event ever took place. I am inclined to think that the schedules were filled up by examination of the rural policemen"

ea and population.

Area and population.

10 Mr Luttman-Johnson's suspicions are confirmed by the figures in the margin which show the percentage of variation between 1872 and 1881 and 1881—1891 Many things have to be taken into consideration when considering the variations in the population of a district. Goalpara and Kamrup for instance were unusually unhealthy between 1881 and 1891 while, on the other hand immigration had more to do with the increase in Darrang in 1891 than at the previous census but there can, I think, be little doubt that the reduction in the rate of increase in the second period is due as much to under-estimation in 1872 as to anything else.

Percentage of variation.

	1872—1881.	1881—1891.
Cachar Plains	+[illegible]	+[illegible]
Sylhet	+[illegible]	+ [illegible]
Goalpara	+ [illegible]	+ [illegible]
Kamrup	[illegible]	— [illegible]
Darrang	+ [illegible]	[illegible]
Nowgong	[illegible]	[illegible]

11. In 1881 the census was synchronous in the plains districts, and though no doubt much more comprehensive than that taken nine years before, there seem to be reasons for doubting whether it was as accurate as the one that followed. On the administration of this census the following observations were recorded by the Chief Commissioner

The census of 1881.

The besetting tendency of officers I Assam is, when anything has to be done to tell their subordinates to do it; and this system was largely carried out as regards the census. Instead of employing every available officer in testing schedules and examining the details of the work, a very large number of the superior officers of the Commission took no direct share I it. There was no doubt some scrutinising of the schedules but as to testing, in its strict sense going through a certain number of houses in an enumerator's block and calling out the inhabitants to see if any had been omitted of this hardly trace is to be found in the reports, and it is certain that it was very seldom indeed (if ever) that such an examination was made. What the Census Commissioner desired was that, during the whol tim the preliminary census was going on the superior officers should be at the beds of the enumerators, testing their work in half a dozen villages a day ..... This part of the census operations was most inefficiently conducted in Assam.

It is not, I think, unreasonable to assume that a census, of the conduct of which the Head of the Local Administration could speak in such terms, left something to be desired upon the score of accuracy and that a part of the increase in the decennium ending 1891 may be assigned to under-enumeration ten years before. This explanation will not however hold good on the present occasion. The census of 1891 was taken with the greatest possible care, and there is no reason whatever for supposing that any increase that may have occurred in the population is due to greater accuracy in the enumeration of 1901

12. Although 1872 was the first year in which a general census was undertaken attempts had been made on several occasions to ascertain the population of the different districts of the province but these estimates were far from accurate, as will be seen from the statement in the margin, which shows the population of the six districts of the Assam Valley as reported by Mr Moffat Mills to the Bengal Government in 1853, and that returned in 1872 and it is useless to attempt to trace the development of the population from any period before that year

Earlier enumerations

	1853.	1872.
Goalpara	141,[illegible]	440,714
Kamrup	302,[illegible]	395,[illegible]
Darrang	136,[illegible]	236,[illegible]
Nowgong	241,[illegible]	349,[illegible]
Sibsagar	309,[illegible]	508,[illegible]
Lakhimpur	[illegible]	151,[illegible]

AREA AND POPULATION

13. The total area of Assam, including Manipur is 56,243 square miles giving, with its population of 6 136,343 souls, a density of 109 persons to the square mile. The area of the province is about the same as that of England and Wales, though the population of the latter country where nearly three-fourths of the inhabitants live in towns, is more than four times as dense but it is scarcely reasonable to draw comparisons between an agricultural and a manufacturing country; and if Scotland (135) or France (189) be taken as the standard, the province does not appear so destitute of inhabitants, while the density is six times as great as that prevailing in Norway In India, however it is the fashion to have a dense population even in agricultural districts and in 1891 the only British provinces where the density was less than that of Assam were Sindh Burma, and Coorg, and there is no denying the fact that for India, Assam is a very sparsely populated country, which could easily support a much larger number of persons than are at present to be found within its boundaries.

Area and population of Assam.

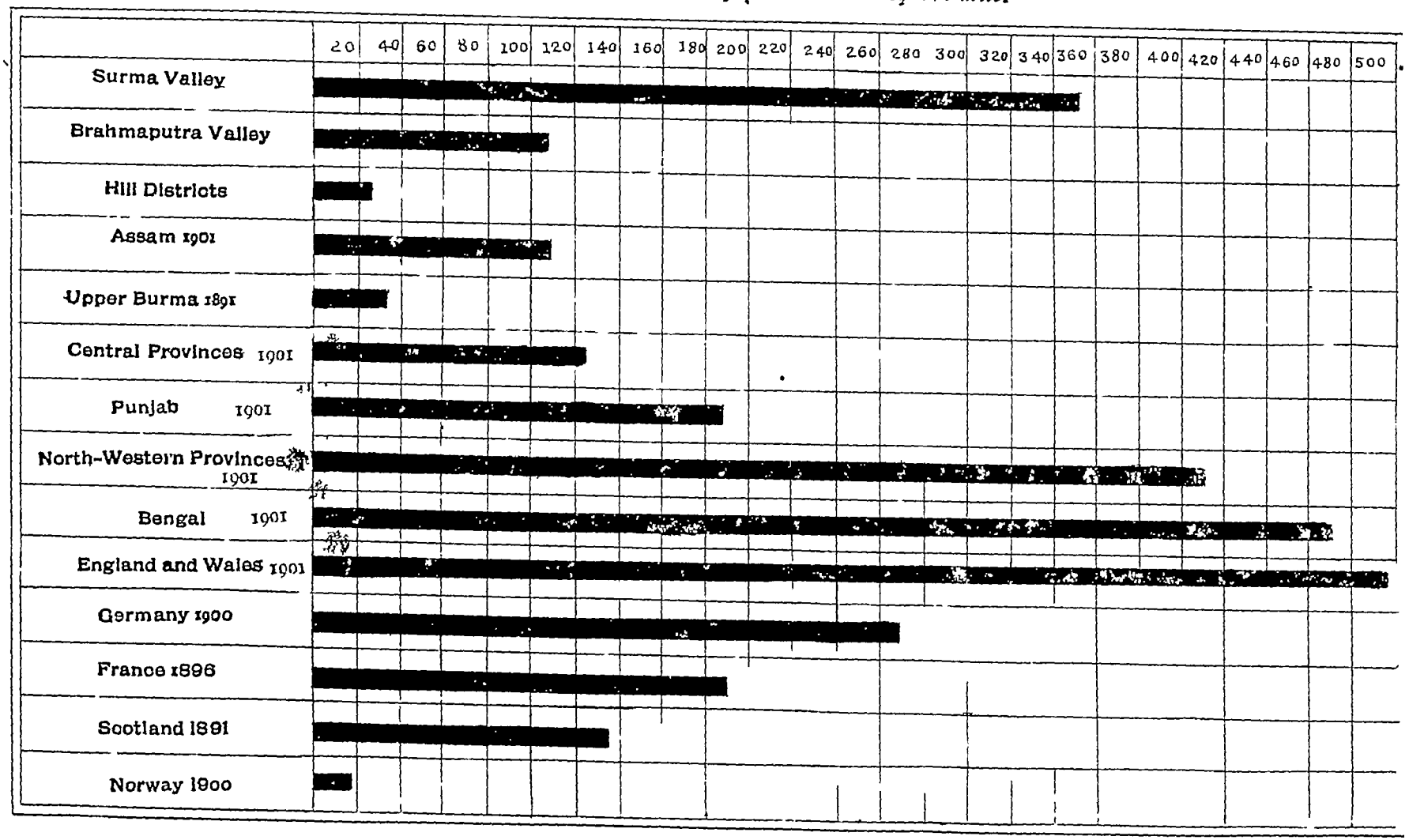
Population per square mile.

Assam	1901	109
Upper Burma	1891	— 53
Central Provinces		— 115
Madras		— 271
North-West Provinces		— 277
Bengal		— 671
England and Wales		— 606
Germany	1900	— 300
France	1896	— 189
Scotland	1891	— 135
Norway	1890	— 19

The Surma Valley where there are 353 persons to the square mile cannot be said to be in any urgent need of raiyats to cultivate the soil, though the fact that the popula

Diagram showing the density of population in Assam and other Countries.

Each division represents twenty persons to the square mile.



tion of the Habiganj subdivision, where the density in 1891 was 509 to the square mile, has increased by 10 per cent during the last ten years, tends to show that there is no immediate fear of the people outgrowing the capacity of the soil to support them but in the Assam Valley, where there are, on the average, only 108 persons to the square mile, things are very different. In 1900, the Commissioner of the Valley estimated that, after making allowances for hills, rivers, and swamps, there were five million acres of culturable land in his division awaiting settlement, and, as in Kamrup in that year, there were only 100 acres of cropped land for every 125 of the inhabitants, it would not be unreasonable to assume that there is room in the Brahmaputra Valley for another four million persons The Assam hills contain an immense area of unsettled land, there being only 27 persons to the square mile, but a great portion of this is unfit for cultivation, and in many places malaria would kill off any persons who had not, like the Bodo tribe, become more or less immune after many generations of life in the *terai*

Area and population

Area and population

14 Subsidiary Table I shows the density of population by districts The variation is very marked, ranging from 412 in Sylhet to 11 in the Lushai Hills, but these contrasts are only to be expected in a province which contains such large areas of hilly country which could never support a dense population The density in the Cachar Plains is not half that of Sylhet, but in 1872, when Sylhet was a thickly-peopled district, there were only 99 persons to the square mile in Cachar, and it is doubtful whether the proportion of culturable land is as large in this district as it is nearer Bengal

Density of population by districts

Turning to Assam Proper, we find that in 1872 the population was densest at the lower end of the valley In Kamrup there were 146 persons to the square mile, in Darrang, there were not half, and in Nowgong only a little over half, of this number, while Lakhimpur with a population of 29 to the square mile was almost as sparsely peopled as a hill district The explanation of this distribution of the population is to be found in the history of the country The Moamaria insurrection, at the end of the eighteenth century, and the civil wars and the invasion of the Burmese, at the beginning of the nineteenth, compelled all those who had the means of doing so to leave the upper portion of the valley and seek a refuge in the neighbourhood of Bengal, where they could obtain some protection from the British Government, and, according to Colonel Jenkins, with the nobility and gentry retired a vast body of the lower classes Those who remained suffered from fire, sword, and pestilence The Moamarias pursued the Ahom Raja to Gauhati, laying waste the country on the way, and when the Bura Gohain or Prime Minister succeeded in quelling the insurrection, he, in the words of Colonel Jenkins, "desolated all the province above the Dikkhu from Ghorgao to Sadiya, rendering the whole country nearly a desert" The Burmese also behaved with much brutality when compelled to retire before our troops, and are said to have carried off with them no less than 30,000 slaves, and the consequence was, that, when we assumed charge of the province, we found that the people had been so oppressed and harassed in Upper Assam that they had almost given up cultivation, with the result that their numbers were being as much reduced by famine, and the diseases which it brings in its train, as they had been by the sword and the slave-making proclivities of the Burmese Lower Assam has not, however, proved favourable for tea, and during the last twenty years has been so abnormally unhealthy that the population has remained almost stationary in Goalpara, and in Kamrup and Nowgong has actually declined, so that the tide which a hundred years ago set westwards is now flowing east again Twenty years ago there were in Kamrup 167 persons to the square mile, now there are only 153, there were then 82 persons in Nowgong, now there are 68, and in Goalpara, though there has been an increase, it is only from 113 to 117 In Lakhimpur, on the other hand, the number of persons to the square mile has trebled in the last 29 years, and in Sibsagar has nearly doubled The increase in Sibsagar is, moreover, obscured by the fact that a large and very sparsely-populated tract of country has recently been transferred to it from the Naga Hills, and had it not been for this change in boundaries, the population per square mile would now have been 197 In Darrang, the sadr subdivision, which contains some of the most flourishing tea gardens in the province, has increased largely in population, but Mangaldai, which is mainly agricultural and has been affected by *kalá-ázár*, has declined, as will be seen from the figures in the margin *

	1901	1881
Tezpur	166 733	91 862
Mangaldai ..	170,550	161,971

In the Assam range the density of population decreases steadily, the further one goes eastwards This is chiefly due to the fact that the Garo Hills district includes a certain amount of *terai*, into which emigrants from Goalpara and the neighbouring

* The increase in one case and the decrease in the other is in reality greater than that shown, as the Orang mauza, which in 1891 contained a population of 6,147 souls, was transferred in 1894 from Tezpur to Mangaldai

and districts of Bengal make their way Few immigrants are attracted to the other hill districts and the indigenous population for reasons which will be discussed elsewhere, does not increase rapidly In North Cachar the density has risen from 11 to 24, but this is due to the presence of a large floating population engaged on the construction of the railway The rate in the Khasi and Jaintia and Naga Hills (34 and 33) is much the same as that of ten years ago

TOWNS

15 There is no province in India in which the residents in towns form such a small proportion of the total population as Assam, but the explanation is not far to seek. There are no manufactures of any importance in the province, and tea, which is the one industry in which capital has been invested tends to prevent the growth of towns, each large garden forming a centre in itself with its own kayah who acts as general merchant and money lender and, if possible, its own market where the coolies can obtain their supplies from the neighbouring villages The natives of the province are almost all agriculturists in the Assam Valley at any rate, trade and the crafts are almost entirely in the hands of foreigners, and there is nothing to attract the people to the small towns which do exist Every one of these is the headquarters of a district or subdivision and in many cases were the magistrate a court removed, the place could not lay claim to the status of a town at all Subsidiary Table III shows the percentage of the urban population in each district. The Khasi and Jaintia Hills head the list though the percentage is only 4 1 as the general population is so sparse that the presence of the headquarters of the Administration is very noticeable; next comes Kamrup (5 5) where there are two towns and then Lakhimpur (3 0) which contains the flourishing little town of Dibrugarh In Manipur no less than 23·6 per cent. of the population is classed as urban, but as will be explained later on, Imphal can hardly be considered to be a town in the ordinary sense of the word In all other districts except the Naga Hills, less than three per cent. of the population live in towns.

	Percentage of urban population.
Assam, 1901 (including Manipur)	2 0
Assam, 1901 (excluding Manipur)	1·9
Assam, 1891 — —	·4
Bengal, 1901 — —	4
Madras, 1901 — —	9·2
Punjab, 1901	17·9
N.-W. Provinces, 1901 —	13·4
India, 1901 — —	9·2
England and Wales —	77·7

16 Sylhet is still the largest town in the province, but presents the melancholy spectacle of steady decay the population having decreased at each successive census and the town being full of deserted *basti* sites and houses falling into ruins. Mr John Willis, in 1789, estimated that Sylhet had a population of 75,382 souls; but though it was no doubt considerably larger then than it is at the present day this estimate must I think have been unduly high The situation of the town is not favourable for trade, as, in consequence of the silting up of the river it cannot be approached by steamers in the cold weather and little or no assistance can be obtained from the railway as the nearest station is thirty miles away The earthquake of 1897 destroyed many of the masonry buildings in the town such home manufactures as are carried on are small and unimportant, and there is no immediate prospect of any increase in population or return of prosperity The decrease as recorded at the census is only 134, but the actual decrease is considerably more than that The jail population in 1901 shows an increase of 440 over the figures of 1891 when three branch jails were in existence and there were present in the town on the census night a large number of up-country coolies, engaged in the reconstruction of the collectorate and other public buildings The local authorities calculate that if allowance is made for these two factors, the actual decrease in the population of the town is as much as one thousand or fourteen hundred

Sylhet.	
1872 — — —	36,906
1881 — — —	34,487
1891 — — —	34,387
1901 — — —	33,888

17 Gauhati is another town which has sunk from the position of an important city to one of comparative magnificence It is mentioned in the *Yogini Tantra* it was the capital of the Koch Kings under the Abom Rajas it was the residence of the Viceroy of Lower Assam and the fortifications which surround the town for miles, the huge tanks and the masonry and brick work which are found in every direction beneath the soil bear evidence to its departed glory In reality however, this decline is due to causes which make for the welfare of the people. The Assamese are farmers, and not traders or artizans, and as they are no

Gauhati (including North Gauhati).	
1872 — — —	11,486
1881 — — —	11,886
1891 — — —	10,817
1901 — — —	14,344

Area and population

The rural population

longer exposed to the attacks of the hill tribes or neighbouring princes, and are not required to attend at the Raja's court, they remain near their fields instead of crowding into the town. The natives of the Brahmaputra Valley have in fact little or nothing to do with the growth of their towns, and in Gauhati, nearly half of the population are foreigners, only 54 per cent of the people censused there using the Assamese language, and only 52 per cent having been born in the Kamrup district. North Gauhati has been excluded from the municipality since the last census, and the population of what is now called Gauhati town is only 11,661, but for the purposes of comparison I have included the figures for this suburb in the statement in the margin. Gauhati is the present terminus of the Assam Branch of the Assam-Bengal Railway, and the construction of this line has produced a very considerable increase of population during the last ten years. The headquarters of the railway staff will, however, be shortly moved to Lumding, and it remains to be seen how far this increase will be permanent.

18 Dibrugarh and Silchar, which are situated one at the eastern end of the Brahmaputra and the other at the eastern end of the Surma Valley, depend for their prosperity upon the tea gardens, by which they are surrounded. During the last ten years there has been a great development of the tea industry, and there has been a proportionate increase in the population of these towns, but so long as they remain, as at present, without any manufactures or industries of their own, they are not likely to become places of any importance.

	Silchar	Dibrugarh
1872 ..	4,625	2,774
1881	6,567	7,153
1891 ..	7,523	9,876
1901 ..	9,256	11,227

19 Shillong is the headquarters of the Local Administration and owes its importance entirely to that fact. It was levelled to the ground by the earthquake of 1897, but has since been rebuilt, and there has been a considerable increase of population since the last census.

	Shillong
1881	3,737
1891	6,720
1901 ..	8,384

20 Since 1881 the population of Barpeta has been declining, but it is a matter for surprise that the decrease during the last ten years has not been greater. Barpeta is the Mecca of the Mahapurusias, and on a small patch of consecrated ground, a dense population is crowded in surroundings of the most unsanitary description. The members of this sect have strong prejudices against vaccination, and in 1895 nearly four per cent of the population died from small-pox alone. The town has always been subject to floods, and has been rendered almost uninhabitable by the earthquake of 1897, which raised the beds of the river and altered the level of the country. All public buildings go under water during certain seasons of the year, and it has been decided to remove the headquarters of the subdivision to a more convenient site.

	Barpeta.
1872 ..	10,606
1881	11,333
1891	9,342
1901	8,747

21 Imphal is the one large town in the province, though it can hardly be considered "a large town" as defined in the Census Code. As is frequently the case in Native States, there is a tendency for population to accumulate round the palace of the Raja, but the place is more like an overgrown village than a town in the ordinary sense of the word. There are few shops or metalled roads, there is nothing in the way of municipal administration, and the inhabitants for the most part live in houses buried in the dankery of bamboos and fruit trees so dear to the native heart. The rural character of the place is, however, most clearly brought out by the record of occupations, from which it appears that over fifty per cent of the working males make their living by agriculture.

	Imphal
1901 ...	67,093

None of the other towns in Assam are of sufficient importance to call for special mention, as only one of them (Goalpara) possesses a population of as many as 6,000 souls. There are in fact only 18 towns in the province, excluding Manipur, and the average population of each town is only 6,315.

THE RURAL POPULATION.

22 The ordinary traveller through the plains of Assam would find himself not a little embarrassed if asked to define a village, or to point out where the boundaries of one ended and those of another began. In the cultivated tracts, rice is grown in great *pathars* or plains, over which are dotted about groves of bamboos, in which the houses

and are concealed and it would as a rule, be difficult to determine whether one or more of these clumps should form a village whether a clump should or should not be subdivided, and to which particular main clump one of the minor clumps should be assigned. In the areas which have been cadastrally surveyed, the difficulty was overcome by accepting the cadastral village as a village for census purposes but the cadastral village is, as a rule, merely a block of land which can conveniently be surveyed upon one sheet of the map and is not a village in the sense in which that term is ordinarily used. Elsewhere the definition usually adopted was a collection of houses bearing a separate name, and in the Garo Hills where the people have been much scattered by their dread of *kalé-ádár* a tract of country was in many cases treated as a village. In the Lushai and Naga Hills and in North Cachar, the villages are definite units which can be clearly recognised as the houses are arranged in close proximity down either side of the village street, and there are no other buildings anywhere in the neighbourhood, but in the other districts there is none of this pleasant certainty as to when you have entered or left a village. There are no village lands no village community and it must I fear be admitted that the Assamese or Sylhetti village is such an indeterminate and amorphous entity that from the statistical point of view it is almost valueless. To take our figures however for what they are worth, it appears that the villages carved out by the census and the cadastral survey run small. Fifty-six per cent of the population of the province live in hamlets containing less than 500 persons, 38 per cent. in villages ranging between 500 and 2 000, and less than 5 per cent. in those containing between two and five thousand inhabitants.

The population is most scattered in the Garo and Khasi and Jaintia Hills, in the former case 92 per cent and in the latter nearly 84 per cent. of the people living in the lowest grade of villages but in the Naga Hills, more than half of the population live in villages containing over 500 inhabitants, as, till comparatively recently the district was too unsettled for small communities to be able to exist in safety In the plains districts the percentage of persons living in the lowest grade of villages is highest in Darrang (61 4) and Sylhet (59 6) and lowest in Goalpara and Cachar (47 6 and 44 6) but, owing to the uncertainty as to what constitutes a village, the figures for the plains are of little interest.

There are 22,326 villages in the province, with an average population of 266 souls. In some provinces it is the practice to work out the average area of land to each village, but as there are no village or communal lands in Assam, and as in most districts there are large areas of jungle over which no one attempts to exercise any rights and which are not connected in any way with any village, but which could not be excluded from the calculation, no conclusions could be drawn from the figures for this province. The density of population is best illustrated by statements showing the number of persons to the square mile and nothing further is gained by considering the areality or proximity of villages.

Subsidiary Table II however which shows the number of houses to the square mile, illustrates in another way the distribution of the population Sylhet and Cachar head the list with 84 and 46 houses to the square mile, and at the opposite extreme come North Cachar and the Lushai Hills with less than three. The average for the Brahmaputra Valley is 23, Kamrup having the largest number (31) and Nowgong, which includes a large tract of hilly country only 14, but this test of population has obviously to be accepted with some reservation, as it depends upon the number of inmates to a house, a factor which places the Naga Hills above the Garo Hills, though the latter district has in reality the denser population.

HOUSES AND HOUSE ROOM

28 Subsidiary Table II shows the average number of persons per house at each of the last three censuses, but the figures for 1881 are unfortunately of little value, as there is nothing in the report for that year to indicate the principles laid down to guide the enumerators in determining what was and what was not, a house.

In Assam, the house is looked upon either as the buildings occupied by a single family or as the enclosure which may contain two or more families and there does not seem to have been any uniformity of treatment in 1881 In Cachar the somewhat strange mistake was made of treating each tea garden as a single house, and the high rate in Kamrup was explained by the Deputy Commissioner as being due to failure on the part of the enumerators to grasp what was required. At the last two censuses the same definition was employed a house being declared to be "the homestead consisting of one or more buildings occupied by the members of one family living under a common head with their servants and it is possible to draw some comparison between the figures. The average number of inmates of each house in the province is

Area and population

Houses and house room.

4 6 as compared with 4 8 in 1891, the decrease being common to every district The variations are, however, small, and the close agreement between the figures for the two censuses in the different districts is a strong confirmation of their accuracy The average is highest in Goalpara (5 3), where it is more common for several families to live in one enclosure than in Upper Assam, and where, possibly, some enumerators took the *bari* instead of the *chula* as the house The decrease in Kamrup and Nowgong is due to the general decrease that has occurred in the population The intercensal period has been extremely unhealthy, and in almost every household death has been busy, so that, while the number of houses and families has in all probability remained much the same, there has been a reduction in the number of inmates

In the principal tea districts—Cachar, Sibsagar, and Lakhimpur—the average number of persons to a house is always low, the average family on tea gardens, where there is an abnormally large proportion of unmarried persons who live alone, being considerably below that to be found in villages The decrease in Darrang is very marked, the figure having fallen from 4 8 to 4 2, but here both causes are in operation, the indigenous population having been much reduced in the Mangaldai subdivision, while in Tezpur there has been a great extension of tea cultivation The figures for the hill districts call for no special remark The average in the Naga Hills is lower than that for any other district, but the people are far from prolific, and there is no tendency for families to cling together, the old and infirm living apart from the persons on whom they are dependent, and newly-married couples setting up independent establishments as soon as the knot has been tied

House room of no practical importance in Assam.

24 The average population of a house is not, however, a question of any practical importance in Assam, overcrowding being out of the question There is, as a rule, no lack of suitable building sites, the materials required for the construction of a house cost but little in the Surma Valley, and in the rest of the province can, generally be obtained for nothing, and there is no reason why the whole population of the province should not be well housed That this is actually the case no one would venture to assert, but the defects that exist are due to the apathy and idleness of the people, and not to anything which can be influenced by the action of Government The Assamese villager is a conservative person, with a marked dislike for any kind of work that can possibly be avoided, and, this being so, a high standard of excellence in architecture is not to be expected.

SUSIDIARY TABLE I.—
Density of the population

Natural divisions and districts.	Mean density per square mile.				Variation—Increase (+) or decrease (—).			Net variation 872 to 90 (+) or (—).
	1901.	1891	1881	872.	891 to 1901.	881 to 89	872 to 1881.	
1		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sylhet	412	396	362	316	+16	+34	+46	+96
Cachar Plains	201	178	142	99	+23	+36	+43	+102
Total Surma Valley	353	336	301	256	+17	+35	+45	+97
Kamrup	153	164	167	146	—11	— 3	+21	+ 7
Sibsagar	120	96	79	63	+24	+17	+16	+57
	[197]	[157]	[127]	[02]	[+40]	[+30]	[+25]	[+95]
Goalpara	117	114	113	98	+ 3	+ 1	+15	+19
Darrang	99	90	80	69	+ 9	+10	+11	+30
Lakhimpur	88	60	43	29	+28	+17	+14	+59
Nowgong	68	90	82	68	—22	+ 8	+14	
	[79]	[106]	[95]	[79]	[—27]	[+1]	[+16]	
Total Brahmaputra Valley	108	102	93	78	+ 6	+ 9	+16	+31
Total Plains	166	157	142	120	+ 9	+15	+22	+46
Garo Hills	44	39	35	32	+ 5	+ 4	+ 3	+12
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	34	33	28	23	+ 1	+ 5	+ 5	+ 1
Naga Hills	33	3	31	23	+ 2		+ 8	+1
	[23]	[21]	[16]	[12]	[+2]	[+5]	[+4]	[+11]
North Cachar	24	1	12	18	+13	— 1	— 6	+ 6
Lushai Hills	11	..	..					
Total Hill Districts	27	23	19	16	+ 4	+ 4	+ 3	+11
Manipur State	87		67			..		
Total Province ...	109	93	105	91	+ 6	— 2	+14	+18
	[126]	[119]	[107]	[91]	[+ 7]	[+ 12]	[+ 16]	[+ 35]

Sibsagar, Nowgong, Naga Hills.—The figures within brackets indicate the density per square mile on the former area of the district.

All districts, col ms 3—The figures do not agree with those shown in the Report of 1891, as revised areas have been reported by the Surveyor General for all districts except Darrang

Tot l Province.—Column 3 excludes Manipur; column 4 excludes the Lushai Hills. The figures in brackets show the density for the province, excluding these two places.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II.

House-room.

Natural divisions and districts.	Average number of persons per house in			Average number of houses per square mile		
	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cachar Plains	4 3	4 4	8 9	46 3	33 3	25 1
Sylhet	4 8	4 9	5 0	84 0	80 0	71 6
Total Surma Valley	4 8	4 8	5 3	73 7	65 4	62 8
Goalpara	5 3	5 5	5 1	21 9	20 7	22 4
Kamrup	4 8	5 0	6 8	31 3	34 5	25 9
Darrang	4 2	4 8	5 5	23 3	18 6	14 3
Nowgong	4 7	5 1	5 8	14 3	20 3	15 4
Sibsagar	4 4	4 6	5 8	27 0	34 2	22 2
Lakhimpur	4 0	4 5	6 1	21 9	15 0	7 8
Total Brahmaputra Valley	4 5	4 9	5 9	23 4	23 6	17 9
Total Plains	4 6	4 9	5 6	35 3	35 0	28 8
Lushai Hills	5 2	5 0		2 1	2 4	
North Cachar	4 6	5 0	4 4	2 5	2 1	2 2
Naga Hills	3 3	3 5	..	9 9	6 0	
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	4 8	5 0	4 8	6 7	6 4	5 6
Garo Hills	4 9	5 0	5 4	8 9	7 3	5 4
Total Hill Districts	4 5	4 5	5 0	5 6	5 4	4 9
Manipur	4 7			18 2		
Total Province	4 6	4 8	5 5	23 1	22 8	18 4

North Cachar (1901) —The population of the Railway camps has been excluded

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III.

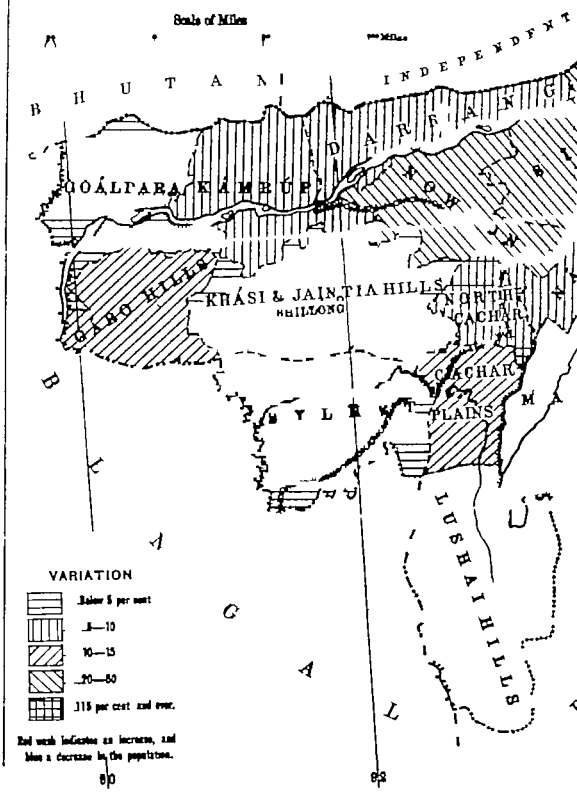
Distribution of the population between towns and villages.

Natural divisions and districts.	Average population.		Percentage of population living in		Percentage of urban population in towns of				Percentage of rural population in villages of				Encampment, boat, and railway population not classed.
	Per town.	Per village.	Towns.	Villages.	20,000 and over.	10,000 to 20,000.	5,000 to 10,000.	Under 5,000.	5,000 and over.	2,000 to 5,000.	500 to 2,000.	Under 500.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	14
Cachar Plains	9,256	376	2·2	97·8	..	...	100			1·5	53·9	44·6	..
Sylhet ...	6,166	264	1·4	98·6	..	45·1	35·4	19·5	..	5·8	34·5	59·6	0·02
Total Surma Valley ..	6,681	278	1·5	98·5		34·7	50·3	15·0	..	5·2	37·5	57·2	
Goalpara	5,012	309	2·2	97·8	..	...	62·7	37·3	..	9·1	43·3	47·6	..
Kamrup	10,204	331	3·5	96·5	...	57·1	42·9	...		0·4	47·8	5·8	..
Darrang ..	5,047	265	1·5	98·5	..		100	..		0·8	37·7	61·4	0·02
Nowgong	4,430	230	1·7	98·3		..	..	100			38·8	59·0	2·2
Sibsagar	3,657	278	1·8	98·2	..	..	52·1	47·9	..	1·4	46·6	51·2	1·4
Lakhimpur	11,127	321	3·0	97·0		100	..		...	10·5	31·6	56·2	1·7
Total Brahmaputra Valley	6,211	290	2·4	97·6	..	36·8	41·5	21·7	..	3·6	42·1	53·5	0·8
Total Plains ..	6,387	284	1·9	98·1		36·0	44·9	19·1		4·4	39·8	55·4	0·4
Lushai Hills	...	345		100	..	...		..		..	33·5	66·5	..
North Cachar Hills ..	...	161	...	100		...			...		2·1	48·1	49·8
Naga Hills	3,093	340	3·0	97·0	...		..	100		4·9	52·5	42·5	0·1
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	8,384	105	4·1	95·9	..	..	100	...	..	3·0	13·1	83·9	
Garo Hills	...	135		100		..	...	...			7·7	92·3	..
Total Hill Districts ...	5,739	152	2·0	98				..	...	1·9	21·0	73·4	3·7
Manipur ...	67,093	465	23·6	76·4	100		..		2·6	16·5	44·6	36·3	..
Total Province	9,514	266	2·9	97·1	37·1	20·3	33·3	9·3	0·09	4·6	38·2	56·4	0·7

MAP

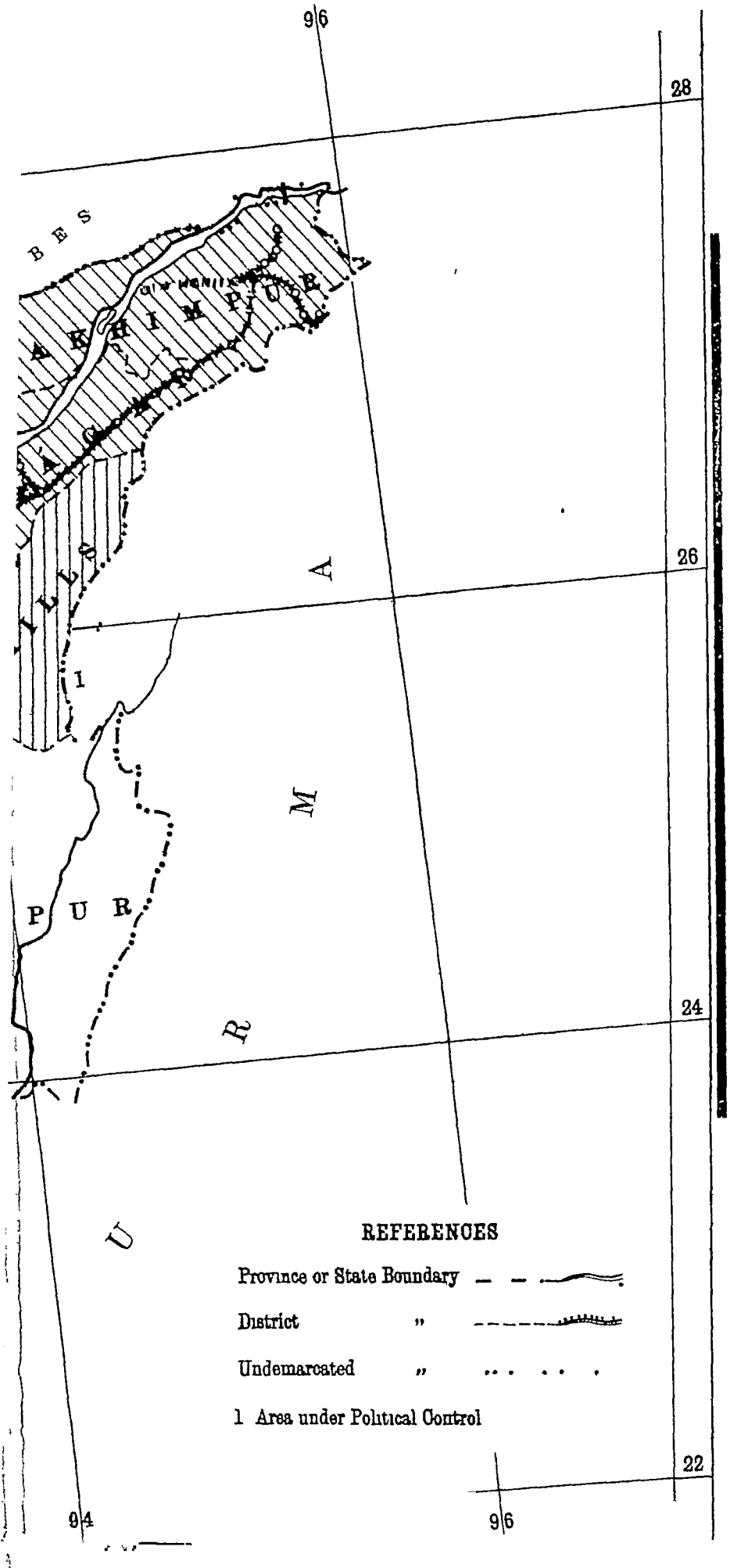
TO ILLUSTRATE THE INCREASE AND DECREASE OF POPULATION IN

A S S A M



Reg. No. 321, Census Coll. Assam.—Feb. 21.—1/ 1.

Exterior Eastern Boundary in accordance with Trace recd. with The Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam's



REFERENCE

Increase & decrease of population-

	Increase %
Goálpára	2·0
Khási and Jaintia Hills	2 1
Sylhet	4 0
Nágá Hills	5·9
Darrang	9 7
Cachar plains	12 8
Gáro Hills	13 7
Sibságar	24 4
Lakhimpur	46 1
North Cachar Hills	115 4
Manipur	0 0
Lushai Hills	0·0
	Decrease %
Kámrúp	7 1
Nowgong	24 8

Photo S I O, Calcutta.

CHAPTER II

VARIATIONS IN THE POPULATION

Variations in the population

25 Of all the census tables there is probably none of greater interest than Table II, which shows the variations which have taken place in the population since 1872, and in few provinces could this table be of more importance than in Assam The variation occurring in any given tract in any intercensal period is the result of (*a*) differences in the degree of accuracy of the two censuses, (*b*) excess of births over deaths or deaths over births, and (*c*) movement of population into or out of the tract concerned, but, though the net result is plainly shown in the census tables, it is by no means easy to determine the exact amount for which each of the three factors is responsible When considering the variations that have taken place during the last ten years, we can leave out of account the first cause, as there is no reason to suppose that there was any difference in the degree of accuracy of the two last enumerations, and all that remains is to endeavour to determine to what extent immigration on the one hand, and the natural growth of the indigenous inhabitants of the country on the other, are responsible for the present state of the population In most other provinces of India the migrations of the people are more or less spontaneous, and do not depend in any way upon the direct action of Government, individuals crossing the boundaries of districts or provinces in search of land or grazing ground, or, not unfrequently, husbands or wives, but in Assam the growth of the population largely depends upon the introduction of a number of people, who are brought up at the expense of European capitalists, and whose journey to the province, and subsequent life there, are controlled by laws and rules framed by Government directly on their behalf During the last ten years, no less than 596,856 persons, or more than a tenth of the total population of 1891, were imported under the provisions of the labour laws, and as in all probability not a single one of these individuals would have entered Assam, had it not been for the tea industry, and, as the well being of this industry depends upon a number of causes, over some of which Government has control, it becomes a matter of some importance to ascertain the extent to which the owners of gardens are developing a province whose crying need, since we took over its administration, has been *raiyats* to cultivate the fertile plains which at present are lying waste

Increase in the province

26 The gross increase in Assam during the last ten years, was 649,041, or 11 8 per cent, or, leaving out of consideration the Lushai Hills and Manipur, for which figures for 1891 are not available, 325,776, or 5 9 per cent There was an increase of 5 3 per cent in the Surma Valley, of 5 7 per cent in the Brahmaputra Valley, and of 11 1 per cent in the Assam range A considerable portion of the increase in the hills is, however, due to the presence of over twenty thousand persons in the North Cachar subdivision, who were engaged on the construction of the Assam-Bengal Railway, and if they are omitted from the calculation, the rate of increase sinks to 6 5 per cent The provincial rate of increase is much lower than that at either of the two preceding censuses (10 7 and 18 2) and, though the imperfection of the enumerations of 1881 and 1872 had no doubt something to do with the increase in each successive intercensal period, the main cause of this check in the development of the province must be found in the abnormal unhealthiness which has prevailed over the greater part of the plains during the last decade Before, however, attempting to analyse the growth of the population of the province as a whole, it is necessary to ascertain what has been going on in the different districts

27 The increase in the Cachar plains amounted to 12 8 per cent, which, though a considerable increase in itself, is only about half of that which occurred between 1 81 and 1891, and less than a third of that between 1872 and 1881 The increase in 1891 was, however, obviously abnormal, and must, I think, have been partially due to under estimation in 1881, when the census operations received little or no attention from the officers of the district The figures in the margin show the extent to which the increase is due (*a*) to what may be called, though not quite correctly, natural increase, *i e*, the increase in the number of

Cachar Plains

			Percentage on total population
Total population	1901		414 781
	1891		367 542
Variation—Total district	..	+47,239	+ 12 8
District born		+38 669	+ 10 5
Immigrants from other districts	..	+ 115	+ 03
Immigrants from other provinces	..	+ 8 455	+ 2 3

tions in persons born in the district (b) to immigration from other districts and (c) to immi-
popu- gration from other provinces Cachar is a fertile, and was originally a sparsely popu-
on. lated country and has for many years acted as a reservoir for the overflow of Sylhet. The amount of unsettled land available for cultivation has, however been much reduced and immigration from Sylhet no longer proceeds very rapidly the total increase due to this cause since the last census being only 2 959 This does not of course represent the total number of persons who have moved across the boundary since 1891 as merely to keep the figures at the level of that year would require the transfer of about 8 500* persons from Sylhet to Cachar The increase in the number of persons born and censused in the district, which amounts to no less than 15 5 per cent must be considered eminently satisfactory but we are here confronted with the difficulty which meets us in every tea district of determining what proportion of this increase is actually due to the fertility of the indigenous inhabitants. There were in 1891 42 772 foreign† women in the district, a considerable proportion of whom must obviously have given birth to children who being born in Cachar go to swell the ranks of the district born. Many of these women would no doubt die or leave during the decade, and would thus cease to bear children in Cachar but these casualties were more than counterbalanced by the new arrivals no less than 48,354 foreign women having been censused in the district in March last; and there will, I think, be no risk of over estimation if we assume that there were in Cachar during the ten years 42 772 foreign women bearing district born children. The fertility of the immigrant is generally and rightly considered to be less than that of the native but I do not think that it is necessary to make any correction on this account, as the proportion of adults is higher amongst the foreigners. From Table VII it appears that for every ten women in Cachar on the night of the census there were six children under ten and assuming that this proportion holds good of the foreigners, they must have had living at the time of the last census 25 663 children born in the district since 1891 If these children who are just as much the result of immigration as are their mothers (as had there been no immigration they would not have been in Cachar) are deducted from the district born the natural growth sinks to 13 006 or 5 2 per cent. which, though satisfactory is hardly as much as we are entitled to expect in ordinary years. It must however be borne in mind that the district suffered severely from the exceptional unhealthiness of 1897 when the number of deaths recorded was more than double that of the average for the remaining nine years of the decade.‡

The increase in the foreign born population is less than I should have expected If we assume that the foreigners censused in the Cachar plains in 1891 and the garden coolies who have been imported into the district during the last decade have been decreasing at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum (a rate which is probably too high) we should expect to find 114,047 foreigners in Cachar in 1901 As a matter of fact there were only 101 252 and we should probably be justified in assuming that twelve to thirteen thousand have left the district, many of them no doubt to work on the Assam Bengal Railway in the North Cachar Hills.

The bulk of the population are agriculturists who cultivate their own land and their condition is described as being one of great prosperity and independence. Amongst people of this class it is usual to find a high birth rate, and were it not for the unnecessarily high death rate prevailing, the population would increase with great rapidity Rural sanitation is however practically unknown in Assam and the matter is complicated in Cachar by the fact that a large proportion of the villages are built upon the banks of small and sluggish rivers, which are exposed to almost every conceivable form of pollution and which carry the germs of disease from one hamlet to another The condition of the district is, however on the whole satisfactory the population is increasing there has been a marked expansion both of trade and agriculture and the people are said to be more prosperous than they were ten years ago.

28 In 1891 the rate of increase was considerably higher in Silchar than Hailakandi, as fifteen or twenty years ago there was more waste land available for settlement at the Sadr than in the Hailakandi subdivision. This cause has to a great extent ceased to operate, with the result that the increase is practically the same in both subdivisions. The percentage of increase on tea gardens during the last ten years was however higher in Hailakandi than in Silchar the reverse being the case as far as the general population is concerned.

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population.	Increase during last ten years.	Per centage.
Silchar	86,180	14,111	19·7
Hailakandi	115,067	+14,248	+15·7

meaning that the death-rate is 40 per mille.

† By foreign I mean others born outside Assam.

‡ Deaths exceeded 22,487 in 1897; average for remaining nine years 1,139.

29 The total population of Sylhet has increased by 87,255, or 4 per cent, during the last ten years, the greater portion of the increase being due to immigration from other parts of India The increase in the general population of Sylhet is very small, the number of persons censused outside tea gardens being only 35,270 more than in 1891, and the increase in those born in the district is very little more, the rate being only 1 9 per cent It is not altogether easy to account for this stagnation in the population It is true that the number of persons born in Sylhet, and censused in other parts of the province has increased by 4,157, and there has probably been an increase of a few thousands in the number of those who crossed the boundary into the neighbouring districts of Bengal, though, as figures for the Sylhet district in 1891 are not available, it is impossible to verify this supposition, but the population of the district is too large for such small numbers to have any appreciable effect upon the rate of increase The mean density per square mile is of course fairly high, and this is a condition which is generally supposed to be prejudicial to a rapid growth of the population, but we cannot attach much weight to this particular cause, as the rate of increase was largest in the Habiganj subdivision, where the density is highest, being no less than 555 to the square mile, and the real explanation must apparently be found in an abnormal mortality, more especially in the years 1897 and 1898

Variations in the population

Sylhet

Total population 1901		2,241 848
" 1891		" 2 154 593
		Percentage on total population.
Variation—Total district	+87,255	+4 05
District born	+38,051	+1 76
Immigrants from other districts	— 621	—0 02
Immigrants from other provinces	+49 825	+2 31

30 It is impossible, however, to form any clear idea of what has been going on in the district as a whole without considering its component parts From the statement in the margin it appears that, while in one subdivision there has been an increase of nearly 10 per cent, in another there has been a decrease of nearly 4 Habiganj has increased by 9 9 per cent, and, though there has been a substantial increase in the number of persons censused on tea gardens, the general population has increased by 7 3 per cent The Deputy Commissioner offers no explanation of this increase, though, indeed, none is required, for, in a province like Assam, where the land is crying out for cultivators, it is only when we find the population stationary or decreasing that we need endeavour to discover the cause and take steps to counteract it In Sunamganj also there has been a very fair natural growth of the population, the increase amounting to nearly 5 per cent, and as this cannot be considered a particularly healthy portion of the district, lying, as it does, at the foot of the Khasi Hills, there is no need to be dissatisfied with the progress made during the decade The same cannot, however, be said of Karimganj, for, though the increase in the total population amounts to 6 7 per cent, the greater part of this is due to the tea industry, persons censused outside tea gardens having only increased by 2 5 per cent In South Sylhet, the state of affairs is still more unsatisfactory, as the population outside tea gardens has actually decreased by 3 9 per cent during the last ten years, owing to the ravages of malarial fever, while in North Sylhet the total population is less by 3 9 per cent than it was ten years ago The Deputy Commissioner attributes this decrease to " the malarial wave which passed over the greater part of the district during 1897 and 1898, when the mortality from fever was enormous The earthquake of the 12th June 1897 was followed by a most virulent outbreak of malarial fever in this subdivision, into the effects of which an Extra Assistant Commissioner was deputed to make an enquiry in 1899, when he found many houses in the Fenchuganj and sadr police stations entirely depopulated "

Distribution of population by subdivisions

	Population 1901	Increase (+) or decrease (−) during last ten years	Per cent age
Habiganj	555 001	+ 50 409	+ 9 9
Karimganj	410 450	+ 25 522	+ 6 7
Sunamganj	433 759	+ 20 371	+ 4 9
South Sylhet	379 159	+ 9 517	+ 2 5
North Sylhet	463 477	− 18,864	— 3 9

31 The vital statistics of Sylhet are not correct, but they are probably less inaccurate than those of any district in the province except Goalpara, and they fully bear out the census figures, as will be seen from the statement in the margin In the subdivisions in which the population outside tea gardens has increased, there is an excess of births over deaths varying in fairly close proportion to the increase disclosed by the census, while in North and South Sylhet there is a close approximation between the census decrease and the excess of deaths The people are said to be prosperous, and the rate of increase will probably rise during the next decade, but there can be little doubt that the northern part of the district is unhealthy, as, even in 1881, at a time when enormous increases were reported from every side, the population was said to be decreasing in this quarter

	Increase outside tea gardens (+) or decrease (−)	Excess or defect of births + or −
Habiganj	+ 36,937	+ 20 759
Sunamganj	+ 20,371	+ 9,287
Karimganj	+ 9 080	+ 3,397
South Sylhet	− 12 724	− 7 937
North Sylhet	− 18 394	− 10,897

ations in
e popu-
ion.

32. The population of Goalpara increased by 2 per cent. during the decade, the *whole of the increase being due to natural growth* as there was a slight falling off in the number of immigrants from Bengal. The district is a purely agricultural one, there is nothing to attract immigrants and as the public health has not been particularly good the rate of increase has been slow the population of the district having only increased by 15,352 souls during the last twenty years. There is nothing, however very remarkable in this fact, as between 1881 and 1891 *the neighbouring district of Rangpur decreased by 1·6 per cent.* and in this portion of the province it would seem that the conditions of life are normally unfavourable to a rapid growth of the population.

Goalpara.

			Percentage on total population.
Total population 1901		668,869	
1891		653,517	
Variation—Total district	+	15,352	+ 2·3
Increase born	—	14,597	+ 2·1
Immigrants from other districts	+	9,947	+ 1·4
Immigrants from other provinces	—	8,148	— 0·7

33. The whole of the increase has taken place in the sadr subdivision, where it amounts to 3·4 per cent. and Goalpara, as in 1891 shows a decrease (1·1 per cent.) though fortunately in no way comparable to that which took place in the previous decade (18 per cent.) The earthquake of 1897 caused much damage to the town of Goalpara, and in the ruins the whole of the bazar *goes under water so that the people are compelled to live* on *machans* inside their houses and no communication is possible except by boat. This unsatisfactory state of affairs has naturally tended to drive away trade, while agriculture has received a severe check from the heavy floods which have swept over the country. A considerable number of *rayyats* have also moved across the boundary into the plains mauzas of the Garo Hills as they are said to prefer *mahals* shared and managed by Government to the zamindars of Goalpara.

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population 1901.	Increase (+) or decrease (—) during decade 1891-1901.	Per-centage.
Dhubri	388,188	+ 14,888	4
Goalpara	188,680	— 1,503	1

34. We now come to the Kamrup district where we first meet with data which enable us to form some conclusions as to the extent of *increase or decrease among the Assamese people*. The population of Kamrup in 1901 was 589,187 showing a decrease during the decade of 45,062 or 7·1 per cent. which is made up of a decrease in district born of 46,316 a decrease in immigrants from other districts of 1,485 and an increase in foreigners of 2,739. The district however is not *quite so sterile as the decrease in the number of district born would at first sight* lead one to imagine. The earthquake of 1897 seriously affected the levels of the country and for a time at any rate threw many thousand acres of good rice land out of cultivation by covering them permanently with water or sand. There has in consequence been a considerable migration of the people, the number of emigrants from Kamrup to other districts of Assam having increased by 8,639, or by about 50 per cent. This subject will be discussed at greater length in connection with *Table XI but the point that is germane to the present enquiry is, that if we take* not the number of persons born and censused in Kamrup at the last two censuses but the number born in Kamrup and censused in the province, the decrease sinks to 37,677 or 5·9 per cent. of the district born. A certain number of these persons are the children of foreign women, but they bear such a small proportion to the general population that this factor need scarcely be taken into consideration more especially as we have other data for estimating the increase or decrease amongst the natives of the province.

Kamrup.

			Percentage on total population.
Total population 1901		589,187	
1891		634,249	
Variation—Total district	—	44,062	— 7·1
Increase born	—	46,316	— 7·3
Immigrants from other districts	—	1,485	— 0·2
Immigrants from other provinces	+	2,739	+ 0·4

35. To any officer who has served in the Assam Valley the increase or decrease of the indigenous inhabitants is a question full of interest. The Assamese are a distinct people, who far from regarding the natives of India Proper as being closely allied to them look upon them with undisguised suspicion and jealousy—a Bengali Hindu of whatever caste standing, on much the same footing for all social purposes as a European or Muhammadan.† The manners and customs of the Assamese are different from those of Bengal their language is different for though Assamese and Bengali are both derived from Sanskrit, a native of Sibsagar and a native of Nadia would be unable to understand one another; even their caste system differs in many important particulars and yet for census purposes it is by no means easy to define who the Assamese are. They are not those who have been born in Assam for a very large number of these persons are the children of foreign parents, who would not be allowed to enter an Assamese cook house neither are they

Are the Assamese increasing?

The population of Chittagong mauzas (869), which has been transferred to the district since 1891, has been added to the district-born totals for that year.

† In an Assamese village the words *Bengali* and *foreigner* are synonymous. They are even said to

Variations in the population

the people who speak the Assamese language, for in Upper Assam, at any rate, a certain number of immigrants who have settled down in the country have returned themselves in the census schedules as speaking Assamese There is, in fact, no absolute test by means of which we can divide the inhabitants of Assam into those who are Assamese and those who are not The caste table, however, enables us to ascertain, with a very fair degree of accuracy, the variation that has taken place during the last ten years, and though we cannot trace the rate of increase or decrease for the whole Assamese population, we can do so for so large a proportion that we are justified in assuming that it holds good for the whole It is with this object that I have included in the appendices to this chapter a table showing the variation that has taken place at the last two censuses amongst the Assamese castes and the indigenous tribes, whom for the purposes of this enquiry I have classed with the Assamese The indigenous tribes, and certain castes, such as the Kalita, Boria, Ahom and Chutia, are peculiar to Assam, and though other castes, like the Kewat and Kaibartta, are common to Assam and Bengal, there is no reason for supposing that they emigrate to Kamrup or the districts which lie to the east Other castes, such as the Brahman, Kayastha, Jugi and Shaha, are common to Kamrup and other parts of India, but it is not likely that they have immigrated to that district during the last decade in sufficient numbers to affect the accuracy of our calculations, and if this assumption is incorrect, it merely means that the decrease amongst the Assamese is more serious than I have supposed

Decrease in the indigenous inhabitants

36 From Subsidiary Table III we find that the indigenous castes, who in 1891 amounted to 545,218, or 85 9 per cent of the total population of the district, had sunk by 1901 to 494,036, which represents a decrease of 9 3 per cent A part of this decrease is no doubt due to the large number of Kacharis and other Assamese who have moved to other districts, but, even if we assume that the indigenous castes are responsible for the whole of the increase in emigration, there still remains a decrease of 42,553, or nearly 8 per cent, which is shared by every caste of importance To sum up, the population, as a whole, has decreased by 7 1 per cent, the district-born population, which includes the children of foreigners born in Kamrup, has, after allowance has been made for the increase in emigration, decreased by 5 9 per cent, the 'Assamese' in the district have decreased by 9 3, or, after allowing for emigration, by 8 per cent, and the speakers of indigenous tongues* by 7 9 per cent There is no reason to suppose that this decrease is due to careless enumeration, as the land revenue returns unfortunately confirm the census figures, the demand for ordinary cultivation in 1900 being Rs 1,05,538 less than it was in 1893, the first year after the re-assessment

During the last ten years *kalá-ázár* has been dying out, but in spite of this the district has been very unhealthy Between 1881 and 1891, the recorded deaths exceeded the recorded births by 20,221, and the census showed a decrease of 3 2 per cent in the district born Between 1891 and 1901 the deaths exceeded the births by 29,248, and the district born, even after allowing for emigration, decreased by 5 9 per cent, so that it seems fairly evident that in spite of the decrease in *kalá-ázár*, the last ten years have been more unhealthy than the ones that preceded them The district has been singularly unfortunate, the present population being 55,773 less than it was twenty years ago, but there are signs that the tide is turning, as in 1899 and 1900 the recorded births exceeded the recorded deaths

Distribution of population by subdivisions

	Population 1901	Decrease	Percentage of decrease
Gauhati	473,252	−25,292	− 5·0
Barpeta	115 935	−19 770	−14 5

37 The decrease in the sadr subdivision is only 5 per cent, but in the small subdivision of Barpeta, which now contains a population of only 115,935 souls, it amounted to 14 5 per cent The Subdivisional Officer, who is an Assamese gentleman of some experience, writes as follows on the subject

Prior to the earthquake, the *raiyats* of this subdivision were comparatively well off Owing to the action of the earthquake the greater part of the country has become liable to heavy inundations, with the result that the *raiyats* cannot reap their early rice crop on the low land, and the soil is rendered unsuitable for mustard The loss of these two crops since the earthquake, which are the main products of the fluctuating mauzas, has materially affected the condition of the people for the worse The repeated extraordinary floods of the last three years caused a great deal of distress to the *raiyats*, who had at last to migrate to different places in search of new houses and lands for cultivation

It is probable that the Barpeta subdivision is responsible for a large part of the decrease due to emigration, while the state of affairs described by the Subdivisional Officer is such as would justify us on *a priori* grounds in expecting a high death and low birth-rate.

* *Vide* Subsidiary Table IV

88 The population of Darrang in 1901 was 337 313 showing an increase of 29 873 or 9 7 per cent which is distributed under its main heads in the margin Though there has been a satisfactory increase in the total population of the district it is entirely due to the increase in immigrants from other districts and other provinces and the decline in the district born population (5 6 per cent.) is even more serious than at first sight appears In the first place, there has been a decrease of 1,921 in the number of emigrants to other districts and if we take this factor into account the decrease in the district born rises to 6 2 per cent. The increase or decrease in the district born in a tea district is not however as I have already pointed out, a reliable clue to the real growth or decay of the indigenous population owing to the fact that a large number of the district born are the children of foreign mothers and it is safer to rely on the indications given by caste, and in this district language. Table III appended to this chapter shows that the indigenous castes, which in 1891 formed 78 2 per cent. of the population have decreased by 5 9 per cent. but we have still to bear in mind that there has been an increase in the number of immigrants who were born in other districts of the valley As Kamrup and Nowgong account for more than the total amount of this increase we are, I think, justified in assuming that these persons are members of the indigenous castes, and if the increase due to this cause be deducted the decrease in the indigenous castes amounts to 7 5 per cent The language test can also be applied with some degree of safety in Darrang as Assamese is not used to any great extent by the coolies of this district and this shows a decrease of 8 3, or, after making allowance for the increase in provincial immigrants nearly all of whom no doubt used indigenous languages, of 9 7 per cent. Lastly we find that the whole of the increase in the district is swallowed up by the increase in the population enumerated on tea gardens which has risen during the last decade by 31 652 so that the general population outside tea gardens is actually less than it was ten years ago To sum up the total population has increased by 9 7 per cent. the district born population has decreased by 5 6 or if allowance is made for the decrease in emigration, by 6 2 per cent the indigenous castes have decreased by 5 9, or allowing for the increase in immigration from other districts of the province by 7 5 per cent; and the speakers of indigenous languages have decreased by 8 3 or after making the same allowance, 9 7 per cent; and it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that had the indigenous population of Darrang been left to itself during the last ten years it would have decreased by about 8 per cent. This decay of the Assamese is moreover not a thing of yesterday as the same phenomena, though not in such a pronounced form were to be seen at the last census, when though the total population increased by 12 6 per cent., the number of those born in the district remained absolutely stationary

Darrang.

Total population 1901	=	337,313
1891	=	307,440
		Percentage on total population.
Variation—Total decrease	=	+ 29,873 + 9·7
Decrease born	=	6,089 − 5
Immigrants from other districts	=	+ 9,913 + 1·3
Immigrants from other provinces	=	+ 26,261 + 12·9

89 Nothing could be more dissimilar than the character of the two subdivisions of which the district is composed In Tezpur there is every thing to conduce to a rapid increase of population, there are still large areas of excellent land awaiting settlement the cultivator finds a market for his produce in the flourishing tea gardens to which large quantities of coolies are imported every year and the public health has on the whole been good. Tezpur in fact is part of Upper Assam, and shares in the prosperity which has been enjoyed by that portion of the Valley for the last twenty years while Mangaldai, like Kamrup has been stationary or receding Most of the good rice land was settled twenty years ago when Mangaldai had a population of 146 to the square mile as compared with 42 in Tezpur; the soil is not favourable for tea the subdivision has been unhealthy and there has not been a sufficient overflow from the tea gardens to make up for the loss amongst the indigenous population. During the last ten years the general population, *i.e.*, the population outside tea gardens, has decreased by nearly 15 per cent., whereas the general population of Tezpur has increased by 28 per cent A portion of this increase in Tezpur is due to the overflow from tea gardens no less than 13 per cent. of the village population having been born in the Provinces and States from which we obtain our coolies, and it is probable that there has been some movement from Mangaldai eastwards, though this cannot be ascertained from the census tables. There is however no doubt that the superior

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population in 1901.	Increase or decrease (−) since 1891.	Percentage on total population.
Tezpur	182,968	+40,240	+28·2
Mangaldai	154,345	−10,367	−9·5

Three hundred and twenty one persons have been deducted from the district born of 1891 as these persons were transferred to Nowgong during the decade.

healthiness of the sadr subdivision has had much to do with the matter, as 76 births were recorded for every hundred deaths in Tezpur, as compared with only 65 in Mangaldai

Variations in the population

40 Since 1891, the population of Nowgong has decreased by 86,147, or 24 8 per cent, the decrease being due to terrible mortality amongst the indigenous population, coupled with an increase in emigration and a decrease in immigration from other districts, which has to some extent been counterbalanced by an increase in immigration from other provinces The decrease in the district born is no less than 95,939, or 29 7 per cent, but if the increase in immigration to other districts be taken into account, the decrease sinks to 91,997, or 26 4 per cent The district born include, however, the district-born children of foreign women, and the caste table in the appendix shows that if allowance is made for inter-district transfers, the indigenous castes, which in 1891 formed 90 per cent. of the total population, have decreased by no less than 31 5 per cent These melancholy results are confirmed by the language table, which shows a decrease of 30 2 per cent in those speaking indigenous languages, and by the land revenue demand for ordinary cultivation, *i e*, annual and decennial leases, which has fallen from Rs 6,68,000 in 1893 to Rs 5,12,000 in 1900, the decrease of 23 per cent corresponding very closely with the decrease in the general population

Nowgong		
Total population 1901		261 160
" " 1891		347,307
		Percentage on total population
Variation —Total district	— 86 147	— 24·8
* District born	— 95 939	— 27·6
Immigrants from other districts	— 2 978	— 0 8
Immigrants from other provinces	+12,770	+ 3 6

Previous to 1891, Nowgong was a healthy and flourishing district, the population increasing by 21 per cent between 1872 and 1881, and by 10 per cent in the next decade, and the appalling results disclosed by the last census are almost, if not entirely, due to *kalá-ázár*, which, in conjunction with the ordinary causes of mortality, has carried off nearly one third of the indigenous inhabitants of the district Even this, however, does not fully indicate the extent of the harm done The number of immigrants from India has increased during the last decade, and, had the conditions in the district been at all normal, we should have been quite justified in anticipating an increase of 10 per cent on the figures of 1891, which would have produced a population of 382,000 in 1901 The actual number of persons censused was, however, only 261,160, so that it appears that *kalá-ázár*, and the other diseases with which the district has been troubled have destroyed in Nowgong no less than 120,000 persons who in the ordinary course of events would still have been alive

Kala-azar

41 I now propose to touch briefly upon the development and origin of this disease, as it will hardly, I think, be considered out of place, even in a census report, to give some account of the history and character of a malady which has produced such deplorable results in the population of Central and Lower Assam *Kalá-ázár* was known as far back as 1869, when it was reported to be an intense form of malarial fever, which was inducing a high rate of mortality amongst the low and densely-wooded Garo Hills, but first came into prominent notice in 1883, when it spread to that portion of the Goalpara district which lies south of the Brahmaputra, and produced such a rise in the recorded mortality that a special establishment was entertained to move about through the affected villages and administer medical relief The Civil Surgeon of the district, who was in general charge of the operations, came to the conclusion that *kalá-ázár* was only a local name for malarial fever and its consequences, and that there was not a particle of evidence that it was contagious, though this was a peculiarity of the affection that had strongly impressed itself upon the Garos, who are said to have not only abandoned their sick, but to have stupefied them with drink and then set light to the houses in which they were lying in a state of helpless intoxication In 1888 the disease appears to have entered Kamrup, and very soon produced a marked increase in the total number of deaths attributed to fever, under which head I include *kalá-ázár*, as in many cases it is extremely difficult for any one but a medical man to distinguish between the two diseases

The conclusions to be drawn from the vital statistic reports were, moreover, fully confirmed by the results of the last census, which showed that the population of

* District born 1891 ...	319,487	
Add population transferred from the Naga Hills	5,683	
	325,170	
Deduct population transferred to Sibsagar	2,838	
	322,332	Corrected district born 1891
	226,393	District born 1901
	95,939	Decrease

variations in the population. the Goalpara subdivision had decreased by 29 699 souls since 1881 and *kala-azar* was the only explanation that Mr Gait could assign for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. Almost equally disastrous were its effects upon the inhabitants of that part of the Kamrup district which lies south of the Brahmaputra river, who decreased in numbers by 11·8 per cent. between 1881 and 1891, but as it is obvious that a portion of this decrease might be due to migration from the affected tracts of the extent of which it is impossible to form any estimate it is safer to consider the figures for the district as a whole. After making allowance for the increase in the number of emigrants from Kamrup the district born population decreased by 10,245 souls in the ten years ending 1891 but, as pointed out by Mr Gait, this is very far from being the measure of the damage done by the disease. Under ordinary circumstances it is only reasonable to suppose that the indigenous population of Kamrup would have increased largely during the intercensal period and had there been no deaths from *kala-azar* the population of Kamrup in 1891 would have been greater by 75 000 souls than was actually the case.

It is a characteristic of this disease, as of many others that after a time it burns itself out in the localities which it attacks and in 1892 *kala-azar* began to die down in Kamrup By this time, however the disease had obtained a firm hold on the Nowgong district, though here, as elsewhere, its advance was very gradual and its effects for some time can hardly be detected in the mortality returns. The first recorded case occurred at Nowgong in 1888 where it was brought from Gauhati by some boys who attended the school there and in 1889 another centre of infection was started at Roha by a man who came home to die after contracting the disease in Kamrup Two years afterwards the infection was conveyed in the same way to Nokla, and from these three centres the disease gradually spread over the whole district. The inaccuracy of the returns of vital occurrences collected by the unpaid *gaonburas* of the Assam Valley is well known but it is possible to draw some conclusions from them, provided that the amount of error remains constant and the recorded birth-rate for Nowgong is such as to justify us in assuming that there has not been any very marked improvement in registration during the last fourteen years. During the five years 1887 1891 before *kala-azar* had got a grip on the district, the average number of deaths annually from fever was 4,405 Had this rate been maintained for the nine years ending December 31st 1900, the total mortality from fever would have amounted to 39 645 but our records imperfect though they are, show 93 824 deaths as due to fever and *kala-azar* and we are thus left with a recorded mortality from *kala-azar* of 54,179 out of a population which in 1891 only numbered 347 307 souls. The following account is given by the Deputy Commissioner of the effects of the disease upon the district

The state of the district can hardly be realised by a party one who has not travelled throughout it, and been into the villages. Deserted *basti* sites are common few of the people I such cases removed elsewhere but most stuck to their houses till they died I Lal gaon and Hajai villages, I believe hardly any went elsewhere, and these two tribes lost very heavily There seem to be members of Hajais in the neighbourhood of Kharikhana almost all have died; ten or twelve *Hajai villages* at the foot of the *hills near Doboka* have *completely disappeared, and Doboka itself* has shrunk from an important trade centre to a miserable hamlet.

Kala-azar is not only merciless in the number of its victims, but also in the way it kills. Men rarely died under three months, and often *lingered two years, sometimes even more. If two or* three members of a family were attacked with the disease, all its little savings were spent to support them. *Kala-azar* not only claimed victims in a family but left the survivors *impoverished*, if not ruined. A case which came under my personal notice will show what I mean I noticed some fine rice land at Ghilani, near Kampur lying uncultivated, and sent for the *patwari* to question him about it. He came and said—"We were three my father my elder brother and myself. They died of *kala-azar* and we sold our cattle and all we had to support them Now I am ill and shall die next year how can I cultivate the land?

I may instances, an old man or woman, or two or three mail children, are all that I left of a large family In Nowgong, Roha, and Puranigudam are empty places where formerly houses stood, and the same sort of thing can be seen all over the district. So much land has gone out of cultivation that it has hardly any value except in the town, near Silghat and in the Kosdoli mauza. A man will not buy land when it can be had for the asking

I find that the results of the census are amply borne out by the falling off of the land revenue demand. I have examined them, mauza by mauza, and they varied in the same proportion everywhere.

The nature of the disease.

42. The disease is almost as noteworthy for the extent to which it has been a cause of conflict amongst medical men as for the mortality it has produced When first referred to in the Sanitary Reports of the province, it is described as an intense form of malarial poisoning, which was popularly supposed to be contagious The Civil Surgeon of Goalpara, however

Variations in the population

rejected the theory of contagion, and in 1884 expressed the opinion that *kalá ázár* was simply a local name for malarial fever and its consequences In 1889-90 a specialist (Surgeon-Captain Giles) was appointed to investigate both *kalá-ázár* and the so-called *beri-beri* of coolies, and he rapidly came to the conclusion that *kalá ázár* and *beri-beri* were merely different names for *anchylostomiasis*, and that the mortality was due to the ravages of the *dochmius duodenalis*, a worm which lives in the small intestine This theory corresponded with the observed facts to the extent that it admitted, what at that stage of the enquiry could hardly be denied, that *kalá-ázár* was communicable, the uncleanly habits of the natives of the province affording every facility for the transfer of the ova of the parasite from the sick to the healthy, but the support which was given to Dr Giles' views by local medical opinion was withdrawn when Major Dobson proved by a series of experiments that *anchylostoma* were present in varying numbers in no less than 620 out of 797 healthy persons examined by him In 1896, Captain Rogers was placed on special duty to make further investigations, and, in addition to demonstrating various differences of a more or less technical character in the symptomatology of the two diseases, he pointed out that, whereas *kalá-ázár* was extremely inimical to life, the number of cases of *anchylostomiasis* that terminated fatally was by no means large The conclusion to which this specialist came, after a very careful enquiry, was that the original view was correct, and that *kalá-ázár* was nothing but a very intense form of malarial fever, which could be communicated from the sick to the healthy, an opinion which was to a great extent endorsed by the profession in Assam, successive Principal Medical Officers declaring that, whatever *kalá-ázár* was, it had been abundantly proved that it was not *anchylostomiasis* The suggestion that malaria could be communicated did not, however, commend itself to the entire medical world, and was criticised with some severity, Dr Giles writing as recently as 1898—" Dr Rogers, like a medical Alexander, cuts his Gordian knot by announcing that Assamese malaria is infectious In this he places himself at variance with not only the scientific but the popular opinion of the entire world " A complete change in popular and scientific opinion was, however, brought about by the development of Manson's mosquito theory, and Major Ross, who visited Assam, in the course of his enquiry into the manner in which infection by malaria takes place, confirmed Rogers' conclusions, and in 1899 placed on record his opinion that, as stated by Rogers, *kalá-ázár* was malarial fever The only point of difference between *kalá-ázár* and ordinary malarial fever lies in the rapidity with which the former produces a condition of severe cachexia, and the ease with which it can be communicated from the sick to the healthy

The origin of the disease is obviously a matter which must always be open to doubt Captain Rogers is of opinion that *kalá-ázár* was imported from Rangpur, where malarial fever was extraordinarily virulent in the early seventies, but this is still a matter of conjecture What is more to the point is that its advance up the Assam valley seems to have been checked The plains of Nowgong are separated from the plains of Sibsagar, the next district on the east, by sparsely-populated hills and forests, and though a few isolated cases have occurred near the boundary of the two districts, the disease has obtained no foothold It is true that on the north bank it has reached Biswanath, but north of the Brahmaputra it appears to be of a less virulent type, and to spread with less rapidity In Nowgong itself the disease is dying out, and there will probably be a considerable increase of population during the next decade, as the district will soon be connected by rail with the comparatively densely-peopled plains of Sylhet, from which it is expected that there will be considerable migration to the waste lands of the Assam Valley

43 After allowing for the alterations due to transfers of territory, the population of Sibsagar increased by 117,310, or 24 4 per cent The number of persons born and censused in the district increased by 60,102, or nearly 17 per cent, immigrants from other districts decreased by 4,441, or 33 9* per cent, and immigrants from other provinces increased by 61,649, or 69 per cent The increase in the district-born population is most satisfactory, but must obviously to a considerable extent be due to the district born children of foreign women, the mean

Sibsagar		Percentage on total population
Total population 1901	.. 597 969	
" " 1891	.. 480 659	
Variation—Total district	.. +117 310	+24 4
District born	.. + 60,102	+12 5
Immigrants from other districts	— 4 441	—0·9
Immigrants from other provinces	+ 61 649	+12·8

* Born in province and censused in Sibsagar 1901	446,357	Born in province and censused in Sibsagar 1891	367,311
Deduct district born 1901	414,326	District born 1891	354,224
	32 031	Immigrants from other districts 1891	13,087
Deduct population in 1891 of transferred areas	23,385	Ditto ditto 1901	8,646
Immigrants from other districts 1901	8,646	Decrease	4,441

tions in popu- 100.

number of whom in the district during the decade was 54 624, and the growth of population in Sibsagar is best measured by the increase in the Assamese castes and indigenous tribes After making allowance for the additions to the Golaghat subdivision it appears that these persons, who in 1891 formed 73·8 per cent. of the population have increased by 30,524, or 8·6 per cent a rate of increase which seems especially satisfactory when compared with the decrease in the Assamese population of Kamrup Nowgong, and Darrang Sibsagar though it has been free from *kala-azar* has not been particularly healthy during the decade as both cholera and small pox have been unusually prevalent In 1897 the public health was unusually bad but, judged as a whole it must be admitted to be one of the most flourishing districts in Assam, as at each successive census the population has shown a large increase, and is now 88 per cent greater than in 1872 The district contains a large number of well managed tea gardens, which bring both men and money into the province and though a great part of its prosperity is due to the tea industry the natives of Assam are also able to hold their own, and are increasing in numbers.

44 The rate of increase is nearly equal in Jorhat and Golaghat 20·9 and 19·9 and is highest in Sibsagar 32 1 Golaghat has fewer large tea gardens than either of the other subdivisions and in Jorhat the amount of good land still awaiting settlement is not large. The density per square mile is 182 in Sibsagar 267 in Jorhat and 55 in Golaghat which includes a large area of hilly country transferred from the two neighbouring districts. Round Jorhat, which was the last seat of the Assam Rajas, there is very little land left unsettled the density in the Jorhat tahsil amounting to 441 to the square mile which for a purely rural population must be considered high

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population 1901.	Increase.	Percentage of increase.
Sibsagar	311,866	+61,806	+32 1
Jorhat	352,137	+77,886	+28 5
Golaghat	197,882	+31,886	+19·9

45 The population of Lakhimpur increased by 117,343 persons, *i.e* by 46 1 per cent during the decade 16 per cent of this increase being due to natural growth, *i.e* increase in the number of the district born, 2 per cent to immigration from other districts, and 28 per cent to immigration from other provinces. This district has enjoyed remarkable and continuous prosperity At each successive census, the percentage of increase has been over 40 the present population is more than three times as great as that of 1872 and though the chief cause *of the increase is to be found in the numerous tea gardens, and in the coal mines* and other enterprises of the Assam Railways and Trading Company it is satisfactory to see that, in this part of the valley the natives of Assam are also well to the fore. The indigenous castes, which in 1891 formed 60 5 per cent. of the population have increased by 30,335 or 19 7 per cent., during the last ten years, and even though a portion of this increase is in all probability due to an increase in the number of immigrants from other districts there still remains an increase of 16 3 per cent. after making deductions on this account The number of foreigners in the district is very large, no less than 41 per cent. of the population having been born outside the province, and with their children they form the bulk of the population, the persons returned under the principal indigenous castes in 1901 being only 45 per cent. of the whole.

Lakhimpur.

Total population 1901		371,386
1891		254,043
		Percentage on total population.
Variation—Total district	— 11,7343	+46·1
Districts born	+6,676	+26·7
Immigrants from other districts	+ 5,145	+ 2·0
Immigrants from other provinces	+ 70,113	+28·1

46 The population of the sadr subdivision increased by 50 3 per cent., and that of North Lakhimpur by 33·7 per cent. The increase in Dibrugarh calls for little explanation as there has been a great expansion in the tea industry which has in its turn stimulated every branch of trade. North Lakhimpur on the other hand, is a very backward tract situated on the north bank of the Brahmaputra, with a population *of only seventy two to the square mile. It is generally* supposed to be rather unhealthy its soil is not particularly suitable for tea, communications are defective, and the general conditions are not such as to conduce to a rapid rate of progress. It is, therefore, the more satisfactory to find that there has been a very considerable increase in population as this apparently justifies us in assuming that the population of Lower and Central Assam will again increase when once it has been completely freed from the terrible scourge of *kala-azar*

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population 1901.	Increase or decrease (+) or (−).	Percentage.
Dibrugarh	268,473	+66,888	+33
North Lakhimpur.	64,384	+11,386	+20

47 The population of North Cachar has risen from 18 941 to 40 812 which is equivalent to a rate of increase of 115·4 per cent., but this almost entirely due to the fact that the Assam-Bengal Railway is still under construction, and if the persons enumerated by the

North Cachar

railway authorities are deducted, the population of the subdivision sinks to 20,490, which gives an increase of 8 per cent. The persons censused on railway land are merely temporary visitors, the great majority of whom will have disappeared before the next census, and it is doubtful whether even the opening of the line will attract population to the subdivision to any great extent, as the soil is poor, and does not seem to be suitable for anything more advanced than the *jhums* of the Kukis, Nagas, and Kacharis, who are its present occupants North Cachar, although treated as a separate district in the census tables, is in reality only a subdivision of the Cachar district, and the variations in population cannot, therefore, be traced, as Cachar was the district of birth returned in the schedule, and there is nothing to show whether hills or plains are referred to

Variations in the population

48 After allowing for the large transfers of area that have taken place since 1891, the population of the Naga Hills increased by 5,765, or 5 9 per cent, but it is impossible to divide this increase into the three heads,—district born, immigrants from other districts, and immigrants from other provinces,—as no conclusions whatever can be drawn without adjusting the figures for 1891, and we do not know in what district the people living in the area transferred to Nowgong and Sibsagar were born The Naga tribes (excluding the Rengma Nagas, some of whom lived in the transferred area), who form 86 per cent of the population have, however, only increased by 4,067, or 4 8 per cent, and this can be taken as a fairly accurate measure of the natural increase Births and deaths are not recorded in the district, but the Deputy Commissioner reports that the public health has been bad, and that the rate of increase is as high as he expected The people on the whole are prosperous, but for some reason or other not prolific In Nowgong and Kamrup, where the figures are not much disturbed by immigration, there were on the census night 115 and 110 children under 5 for every 100 married women between 15 and 40 In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, there were 108 children, yet in the Naga Hills the number is only 85, though the general health there must certainly have been better than in Nowgong On this subject, Major Woods, the Deputy Commissioner, writes as follows

The Naga Hills

When testing the enumeration in this subdivision, I was particularly struck with the paucity of children House after house I visited, and found married people who had in some cases been married for years and no children! Lhotas keep as many wives as they can afford to, so possibly this may have something to do with the paucity of children and the decrease of the population The Lhota girls marry much earlier than the girls of other tribes, this also may affect the population There is no infanticide, even natural children are allowed to live

In 1897, when I visited this part of the country, I too was impressed with the scarcity of children, and was amused at the explanation offered by a Naga, which was to the effect that the good looking women were overwhelmed with attentions from their male friends, and that the ugly ones were neglected altogether, but the true explanation of their sterility has, I think, been indicated by Mr Davis, who probably knows the Naga better than any one living, and is of opinion that he is naturally rather sluggish in sexual matters, and that the hard work done by the women tends to prevent conception

49 The total population of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills increased by 4,346, or 2 19 per cent, almost the whole of this small advance being due to an increase in the number of the indigenous inhabitants Hitherto, the district has shown a steady growth of population, the increase at the last two censuses amounting to as much as 17 9 and 19 5 per cent, and though part of this increase was possibly due to the greater accuracy of the enumeration of 1891, as compared with its predecessors, there is no doubt that the progress of the district has received a temporary check The actual number of deaths attributed to the great earthquake of 1897 was only 916, but it had a most prejudicial effect upon the health of the people, as pointed out by the Deputy Commissioner in the following extracts from his report

The Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

Total population 1901		..	202,250
" " 1891		..	197,904
			Percentage on total population.
Variation—Total district		+4,346	+2 19
District born	...	+3,827	+1 93
Immigrants from other districts	..	— 45	—0·02
Immigrants from other provinces		+ 564	+0·28

The earthquake of 1897 caused a great change in the general health and material progress of the people it was followed by incessant rain, and, owing to exposure, anxiety, want, and bad food, dysentery and fever were prevalent throughout the district during the latter half of 1897 and during 1898 and 1899 The orange groves in Shella, which were the most valuable property of the people, were entirely destroyed by the sands brought down by the floods The people have not been able to recover their loss, and a great many seem in actual want As to the effects of the earthquake, I quote below the remarks of one of the Charge Superintendents, which may be found interesting

ons in popu-

The Reverend Dr John Roberts writes:

"Up to the time of the earthquake the whole of the district was fairly healthy and prosperous, but after the earthquake a most malignant kind of fever was very prevalent, and hundreds of people died of it. This lasted for about two years. I have been in the district for close upon thirty years but I never saw such mortality as during the years 1898 and 1899. Another feature after the earthquake was a marked decrease in the number of births. In this respect things are righting themselves gradually

The decrease in fertility observed by Dr Roberts is clearly brought out by Table VII from which it appears that while in 1891 there were 117 children under 5 for every 100 married women between 15 and 40 in 1901 there were only 108 but during the next decade, unless we are visited by another calamity similar to that of 1897 the population of the district will probably increase rapidly as in normal years the country is healthy and the people industrious and prosperous.

50 The population of the sadr subdivision has remained almost stationary the total increase being 946 or 7 per cent., which is more than accounted for by the growth in Shillong itself but in Jowai there has been an increase of 3,400 or 5·2 per cent. At the census of 1891 the rate of increase was higher in Shillong than Jowai, and this change in the condition of affairs is due to the fact that the effects of the earthquake were felt less severely in the eastern portion of the district

Distribution of population by subdivisions.

	Population 1901.	Increase (+) or decrease (−).	Percentage.
Shillong	13,946	+ 946	+ 7·7
Jowai	− 62,931	+ 3,400	+ 5·2

51. The population of the Garo Hills increased by 16 704, or 13 7 per cent., the whole of this increase being accounted for by an increase in the number of persons born in the district, the increase in the immigrants from other parts of Assam being more than counterbalanced by the decrease in the number of immigrants from other provinces. The greater part of the increase has occurred in the plains mauzas, where the population has risen from 27 507* to 37 241 an increase of 35 3 per cent. In the hills the population has increased by 7 4 per cent, a figure which corresponds closely with the increase amongst the Garos, who form 75 per cent of the population, and is rather less than the ratio of increase amongst those who speak the Garo language (10·2 per cent) The natural growth of the population, 13 7 per cent. is very considerable, but I am inclined to doubt the correctness of this figure, as, if the Garos and Native Christians, who are presumably all indigenous to the district, are deducted from the indigenous population, there only remain 17,477 district born, amongst whom we are asked to believe that there has been an increase of 5 373 persons, as the Garos have only increased by 11 626. Such an increase is on the face of it most improbable and I am inclined to agree with the Deputy Commissioner who has formed the opinion on other grounds, that the census of 1891 in the plains mauzas was not exhaustive, an opinion to which the very high rate of increase lends some support. The only other explanation possible is that persons born in other provinces have been returned as born in the district, but there is no reason to doubt the figures for immigrants from other districts, who have increased by 40 per cent., and it does not seem probable that mistakes would be made in the one case and not in the other The actual increase in the indigenous population is probably about 10 per cent., which in a district which has the reputation of extreme unhealthiness must be considered satisfactory

The Garo Hills.

			Percentage on total population.
Total population 1901		165,974	
1891		141,570	
Variation—Total district		+ 24,704	13 7
Districts born		+ 18,869	13 9
Immigrants from other districts		8,868	+ 1·9
Immigrants from other provinces		− 2,527	− 2·1

The Garos, however according to the Deputy Commissioner enjoy a considerable measure of prosperity They are in all probability partially immune to malaria, and as they are no longer decimated by *kala-azar* there is nothing to prevent a steady growth in their numbers.

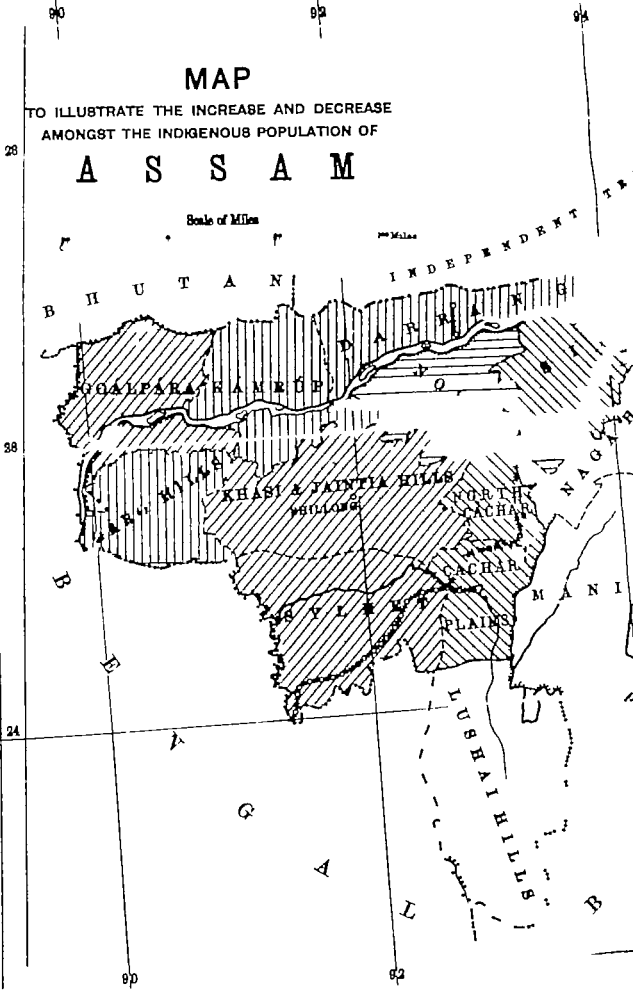
52. Manipur was censused in 1891, but the papers were destroyed in the rising, and the Lushai Hills were censused for the first time last March, so it is not possible to ascertain the growth of the population in the last decade. Between 1881 and 1901 the population of Manipur increased by 63,395 or 28·6 per cent This increase must be due either to natural growth or increased accuracy of enumeration, as there is practically no immigration to Manipur the State born forming nearly 99 per cent. of the total population.

Lushai Hills and Manipur

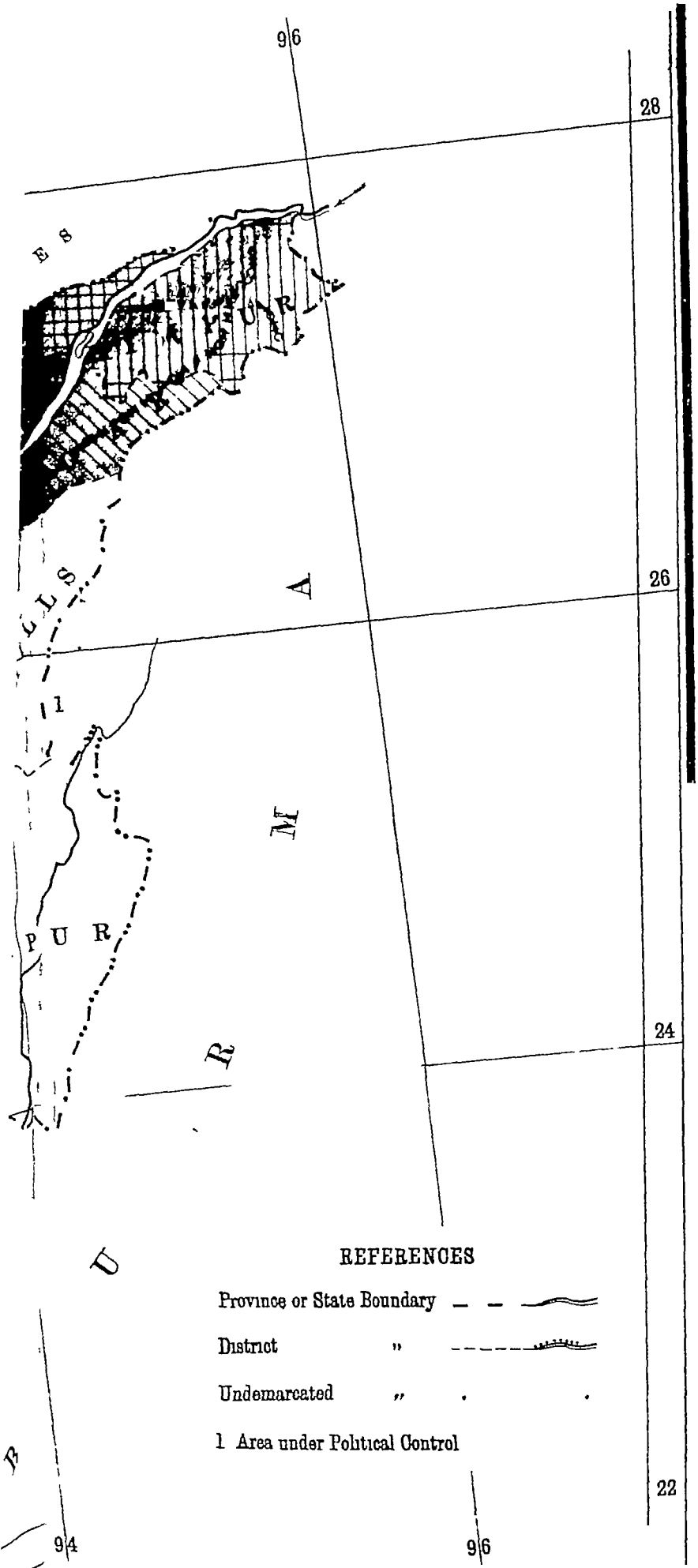
53. After considering the history and constitution of the different districts, we are now *in a position to understand the causes which have affected* the growth of population in the province during the last decade The population of Assam (excluding Manipur and Lushai) has increased by

The province.

* Mauzas VI and VII have alone been taken as plains mauzas.



Exterior Eastern Boundary in accordance with trace recd. with the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam's



PERCENTAGE

Increase or Decrease
(+ or −)

Nowgong	−31 5
Kamrup	− 8 0
Darrang	− 8 0
Sylhet	+ 1 9
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	+ 2 0
Goalpara	+ 2 7
Cachar Plains	+ 5 2
North Cachar	+ 8 1
Sibsagar	+ 8·6
Garo Hills	+10 0
Lakhimpur	+16 3

REFERENCES

Decrease

Nowgong	30 % and over
Darrang, Kamrup	5—10 %

Increase

Sylhet, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Goalpara	0 to 5 %
Cachar Plains, North Cachar, Sibsagar	5—10 %
Garo Hills, Lakhimpur	10—20 %

325,776, or 5 99 per cent, but the number of persons born in the province has only increased by 67,200, or 1 36 per cent, while immigrants from other provinces have increased by 50 85 per cent, and now form nearly 13 per cent of the total population It is unnecessary for us to consider here either where the immigrants come from or to what districts they go, as this branch of the subject will be dealt with in the next chapter, and the point which I have endeavoured to bring out in the preceding paragraphs is the changes that have taken place in the indigenous population I have shown that in Cachar there has been a moderate increase, that in Sylhet and Goalpara there is very little natural growth, that in Kamrup and Darrang there has been a serious decrease amongst the Assamese, which in Nowgong might without exaggeration be characterised as appalling, while in Sibsagar there has been a fair and in Lakhimpur a most satisfactory growth in the indigenous population In the Assam range there has been a substantial increase, except in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, but the number of persons censused is too small to materially affect the general result

Variations in the population

Estimated percentage of increase or decrease amongst indigenous inhabitants

Cachar	+ 5·2	Sibsagar	+ 8·6
Sylhet	+ 1 9	Lakhimpur	+16·3
Goalpara	+ 2 7	North Cachar	+ 8 1
Kamrup	— 8·0	Naga Hills	
Darrang	— 8 0	Khasi and Jaintia Hills	+ 2 0
Nowgong	— 31 5	Garo Hills	+10·0

For a province so sparsely peopled as is Assam, it cannot be denied that these figures are most unsatisfactory, but it must be borne in mind that decreases in population are not peculiar to this province There has been a decrease of nearly a million and a half in the population of the Bombay presidency during the last decade, and if this comparison be rejected on the ground that this portion of the Empire has been visited by famine and plague, we can find precedents at our very doors The Kuch Behar State has shown a decrease at each of the two last censuses, and in 1891 five districts in Bengal returned a smaller number of inhabitants than they had done ten years before, though the period was one of normal prosperity The same can be said of the North-Western Provinces, where the population of a whole division decreased between 1881-1891 by 1 3 per cent

I do not, however, believe that under normal conditions the population of Assam would advance at the slow rate which has been maintained during the last decade In 1897 a species of 'death wave' seemed to pass over the province, and in parts of Sylhet, and Central and Lower Assam, an abnormal mortality was unfortunately not confined to this year alone It is probable that the north bank of the Brahmaputra is not as healthy as Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, and the Kacharis who live on the grassy plains near the outer ranges of the Himalayas are said to be constitutionally a short-lived race, but if the Assamese can increase rapidly at the upper end of the valley, it is only reasonable to suppose that when *kalá-ázár* has finally disappeared, they will at any rate stop decreasing in Kamrup, Darrang and Nowgong The stagnation in Sylhet is due to special causes, and with their removal, the people will presumably revert to a more normal rate of increase, but it is, I think, open to doubt whether in certain parts of Assam, *e g*, Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang, the conditions of life are ever such as to be conducive to a rapid growth of the population

Accuracy of the enumeration

54 It may perhaps be thought that the last enumeration has not been as accurate as its predecessor, and that the low rate of increase is partially due to this cause, but this is not the case The three districts in the province in which the census figures are most likely to arouse suspicion are Nowgong, Kamrup and Sylhet In Nowgong and Kamrup, the decrease in population is accompanied by a proportionate decrease in land revenue, and in both of these districts, if foreigners be excluded, the number of women exceeds the number of men—a fact which in India is generally, and I think rightly, supposed to be an indication of a very accurate enumeration The same holds good, though in a modified degree, of Sylhet, as, in the two subdivisions where there has been a decrease in the general population, the proportion of women is very considerably above the average for the whole district Lastly, we have the vital returns, which, though not accurate, possess a certain relative value of their own I have already shown how fully they confirm the figures for the Sylhet subdivisions, and we find much the same in Assam Population has increased in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, and the recorded birth and death-rate are about equal, whereas in Kamrup, Darrang, and more especially Nowgong, there is a large excess of deaths, the death-rate in the latter district rising to 45 per mille on the mean population, as compared with a birth-rate of 25 per mille

System under which vital statistics are collected.

55 When considering the variation in the population, I have made but little reference to the returns of vital occurrences, and before concluding this chapter, it would be as well to explain why I have not thought it necessary to do so In Assam, the registration of births and deaths is only compulsory in municipalities, places to which Act IV

ions in popu-n.

(B C) of 1873 has been extended and on tea-gardens The tea-garden population at the time of the census was 657,331, and as far as Act I coolies are concerned, the mortality returns are in all probability fairly correct as the Act I coolie, when once he has come upon the garden books must be accounted for in some way or another in the statements submitted to Government. Equal reliance cannot, however be placed upon the figures for non Act coolies, while the birth rate recorded on the plantations is notoriously incorrect, infants who die within a few months of their birth being usually omitted from the registers. The population of the other areas in which registration is compulsory is so small, that it has no effect upon the provincial total, but even in these places, in spite of the penal provisions of the Act the record is far from complete.

In the five upper districts of the Assam Valley the returns are submitted by the *gaonbura* or village headman to the mandal of his circle, to whom in theory at any rate, he makes a verbal report twice in every month. Were this a matter of practice, and not of theory only the returns would be fairly correct as though the *gaonbura* is, as a rule, unable to read or write he would have no difficulty in calling to mind the number of births and deaths that had taken place in his village during the previous fortnight but, as a matter of fact, these reports are submitted at much longer intervals. This of course is an infraction of the rules but as the *gaonbura* is an unpaid servant of Government, the only way of punishing him for neglect of duty is by calling him in to headquarters to explain his conduct, or by depriving him of an appointment to which he in many cases does not attach any particular value. The system thus suffers from the serious disqualification of having as a foundation an illiterate person of unbusiness-like habits whom there are no legal means of punishing for disobedience of orders. Every month the mandal sends in the return for his circle to the tahsildar or mauzadar who submits a consolidated report for the area under his charge to the head-quarters of the subdivision in which it is situated. These reports are then compiled *into a return for the district which is submitted for the examination of the Deputy* Commissioner and the Civil Surgeon.

The returns are tested on the spot as occasion offers by the police and the revenue and vaccination staff, but the amount of testing that it is possible to do is so small in comparison with the total mass that the fear of detection has but little influence upon the mandals who are not as a class particularly amenable to any kind of discipline, and the result is that a large proportion of deaths and a *still* larger proportion of births go unrecorded Column 2 of Subsidiary Table V has been filled up by adding to the population of 1891 the number of immigrants as shown by the Immigration Reports and deducting the number by which the deaths during the last ten years exceed the births, or adding the number by which the births exceed the deaths This statement shows that assuming that births and deaths are recorded with equal accuracy 9 000 deaths were omitted in Kamrup 14,000 in Darrang and 42 000 in Nowgong, but as it is practically certain that more births are overlooked than deaths, it is obvious that the number of deaths omitted is considerably larger than the number shown in the statement. To take another test of the accuracy of the returns, the deaths recorded in Nowgong give a death rate on the mean population for the last ten years, of 44 9 per mille. Had this been the actual death rate during the decade there would in all probability have been a satisfactory increase in the population whereas, as a matter of fact the indigenous castes and tribes decreased by 31 5 per cent and it is plain that the deaths recorded give no indication of the actual death-rate.

In Goalpara the statistics are reported to the police by the village *panchayats* in writing, and here the returns are much more reliable than in Assam Proper as though both births and deaths are omitted they are omitted in fairly equal proportions In Sylhet and Cachar the reports are submitted verbally by the village chaukidars, but the proportion of immigrants is so large, that it is not possible even to make an estimate of the accuracy of the system Subsidiary Table V would suggest that a large number of deaths are omitted, and this is almost certainly the case, but a portion of the difference between the two sets of figures may be due to foreigners leaving the district—a movement upon which it is impossible to throw any light from the Census Tables.

56. The statement in the margin shows the birth and death rate per mille for each plains district worked out on the mean population of the decade. Everywhere the rates recorded are considerably in defect of those which must actually exist, but they reach the height of inaccuracy in Lakhimpur and Sibsagar where, with a rapidly-increasing population the birth rate stands at 25 and 24 per mille t

	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.
Goalpara	28	28
Cachar	31	31
Sylhet	30	31
Kamrup	27	30
Darrang	28	30
Lakhimpur	28	27
Sibsagar	25	25
Nowgong	24	45

Variation in the population

Practically, no attempt is made to record vital statistics in the hills, and it is obvious that, even in the plains, the returns can never be accurate as long as they are recorded by a purely voluntary agency, over which there is little or no control

Decay of the Assamese people

57 I have already referred to the growth or decay of the indigenous population of each district, and it only remains to consider the Assamese people as a whole In 1891 the castes and tribes for which details will be found in Subsidiary Table III, numbered 1,608,257 in the five upper districts of the valley, and formed nearly 80 per cent of the total population, but during the last ten years they have been dying out, and the decrease amongst the Assamese amounts to no less than 6 4 per cent This decay of what in many ways is a most interesting people cannot but be regarded with profound regret both by the Assamese themselves, and by the foreigners who have lived amongst them, and it is to be hoped that during the next decade the specially adverse circumstances under which they have been labouring will disappear, and that with their removal the numbers of the Assamese will again increase

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Variation in relation to density since 1872.

ariations n the po- ulation.

Natural divisions and districts.	Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (−).				Mean density of population per square mile.			
	1891 to 1901.	1881 to 1891.	1871 to 1881.	1872 to 1901.	1901	1891.	1881.	1871.
			4				5	6
Cachar Plains	+ 2·8	+ 2·5	+ 43·9	+ 7·3	90	78	142	99
Sylhet	+ 4·0	+ 9·4	+ 14·5	+ 30·3	4	396	362	318
Total Surma Valley	+ 5·3	+ 1·4	+ 17·5	+ 38·0	333	336	30	256
Goalpara ...	+ 8·0	+ 1·3	+ 5·3	+ 9·2	1·7	4	3	98
Kamrup ...	− 7·	− 1·0	+ 14·8	+ 4·8	53	164	67	146
Darrang ...	+ 9·7	+ 12·6	+ 5·8	+ 43·0	99	90	80	69
Nowgong	− 2·4·8	+ 0·2	+ 1·0	+ 0·3	68	90	8	68
Sibsagar	+ 2·4	+ 20·4	+ 13·3	+ 88·7	10	96	79	63
Lakhimpur ...	+ 4·6	+ 41·2	+ 48·3	+100·2	88	60	43	29
Total Brahmaputra Valley ...	+ 5·7	+ 9·9	+ 19·5	+ 39·0	68	62	93	78
Total Plains	+ 5·3	+ 0·7	+ 18·5	+ 38·5	166	57	42	80
Lushai Hills			—	—		6		—
North Cachar	+ 5·4	− 5·8	− 38·9	+ 36·0	84			8
Naga Hills ...	+ 5·9	+	+ 34·5	+ 44·	33	3	3	23
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	+ 8·	+ 7·9	+ 9·5	+ 44·0	84	33	28	53
Garo Hills	+ 3·7	+ 0·9	+ 8·7	+ 37·2	44	39	35	32
Total Hill Districts	+ 1·	+ 6	+ 4·8	+ 4·3	37	23	9	6
Manipur	...		—		87	—	67	
Total Province excluding Manipur and Lushai	+ 5·9	+ 0·7	+ 18	+ 38·7	65	63	65	9
Province, including Manipur and Lushai	+ 1·8		—	—	—	—	—	—

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in district and foreign born population

Districts.	Percentage of district born in.		Percentage of foreign born in.		Percentage of increase ( ) or decrease ( ) in		Total.
	1901.	1891.	1901.	1891.	District born.	Foreign born.	
			5		6		
Cachar Plains ...	67·44	67·84	2·4	2·34	+ 15·30	+ 8·	
Sylhet	92·4	91·38	7·35	5·34	+ 6·	+ 43·70	
Goalpara	87·58	88·45	9·62	9·96	+ 6·8	− 7·07	
Kamrup	96·72	97·4	2·40	2·9	− 1·5	+ 23·99	
Darrang	79·22	81·60	5·1	4·56	− 5·59	+ 80·3	
Nowgong ...	86·69	91·80	1·34	1·45	− 20·78	+ 2·74	
Sibsagar	67·19	73·59	5·35	4·7	+ 6·96	+ 68·33	
Lakhimpur ...	35·19	61·9	4·16	3·77	+ 41·30	+ 80·32	
Lushai Hills	92·8	—	5·8	—	...	—	
North Cachar	50·99	58·63	40·45	2·3	+ 7·30	+4 75·00	
Naga Hills	91·98	83·58	8·6	17·	—	—	
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	96·41	96·58	·7	1·46	+ 2·00	+ ·94	
Garo Hills	90·4	88·54	3·93	6·63	+ 5·79	− 32·42	
Manipur ...	93·86	—	0·9	—	—	—	

Reliable percentages for Naga Hill are not available owing to transfers of area.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Indigenous castes and tribes

Indigenous Castes	KAMRUP			DARRANG			NOWGONG		
	Number returned in 1891	Number returned in 1901	Difference + or —	Number returned in 1891	Number returned in 1901	Difference + or —	Number returned in 1891	Number returned in 1901	Difference + or —
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Abor ..									
Ahom	475	557	+ 82	3,136	3,454	+ 318	5,265	3,381	— 1,884
Aiton									..
Assamese									
Barna Brahman	385	94	— 291				373	14	— 359
Boria	969	1,002	+ 33	3,568	3 786	+ 218	11,612	7,799	— 3,813
Brahman	24,738	23,145	— 1,593	4,741	6 432	+ 1,691	7,430	6,115	— 1,315
Chutiya	1,036	713	— 323	3,546	3 533	— 13	10,468	6,663	— 3,805
Dafla				347	347				
Doania				..				..	
Dom (Nadiyal)	14,826	10,518	— 4,308	7 988	10 782	+ 2,794	26,223	18,887	— 7,336
Ganak	5,967	6,048	+ 81	8,121	6,246	— 1,875	348	137	— 211
Garo ..	5,800	5 144	— 656	617	547	— 70	1,048	966	— 82
Hari (Brittial Bania)	3 725	2,647	— 1,078	1,846	1,132	— 714	2 997	2,146	— 851
Hira	4,491	4,063	— 428	1,894	1,463	— 431	1,256	898	— 358
Hojai			..				3 637	166	— 3,471
Jugi (Tanti)	17,484	17,619	+ 135	10,957	20,414	+ 457	22 076	15 624	— 6,452
Kachari	94,983	92 104	— 2,879	66,528	63,226	— 3,302	12,514	11 823	— 691
Kaibartta ..	22 468	23,331	+ 863	246	387	+ 141	97	5 930	+ 5,833
Kalita	129,939	115,590	— 14,349	19,470	17 836	— 1,634	24 034	16 326	— 7,708
Kayastha	4,207	4 322	+ 115	1,301	1,689	+ 388	2,656	2,149	— 507
Kewat (Mahesya Vaisya)	32,239	21,143	— 11,096	14,239	13,236	— 1,003	20,553	7,342	— 13,211
Khamti									
Koch	99,952	93,850	— 6,102	54,088	47,427	— 6,661	49 791	33 553	— 16 238
Lalung	2,375	1,592	— 783				46,658	28 985	— 17,673
Mahalia		..		4,510		— 4,510	857		— 857
Matak									
Mech									
Mikir ..	13,595	10,593	— 3,002	2,362	2,814	+ 452	47,881	35,730	— 12,151
Miri	218	1	— 217	2,749	4,176	+ 1,427	243		— 243
Mishmi									
Moran									
Moria	118	135	+ 17	265	161	— 104	585	13	— 572
Mukhi ..	2,335	2 391	+ 56		..				
Namasudra or Chandal	13,076	10,618	— 2,458	350	104	— 246	6,245	5,299	— 946
Nat	954	700	— 254	126	205	+ 79	600	763	+ 163
Nora									
Patia				132	114	— 18	3 296	2 327	— 969
Phakial									
Rabha	17,526	16,341	— 1,185	16 594	15,431	— 1,163	349	188	— 161
Rajbansi ..	21	103	+ 82	250		— 250	116	638	+ 522
Salai ..	7 832	7,426	— 406	1,065	823	— 24	207	64	— 143
Shaha (Sunri)	16,423	14,495	— 1,928	574	523	— 51	1,009	824	— 185
Shan									
Singpho ..					...				
Solanemia		..		274	107	— 167			
Tokar	1,041	736	— 305						
Totla	6,020	7,015	+ 995	101	2	— 79			
Turung						..	...		
Total	545,218	494,036	— 51,182	240,985	226,417	— 14,568	310,424	214,750	— 95,674
Added or deducted owing to the transfer of area				— 321		+ 321	+ 3,166	..	— 3,166
	85 9 per cent on total population of 1891		or — 0 3 per cent	240 664 78 2 per cent on total population of 1891		— 14,247 or — 5 9 per cent	313,590 90·2 per cent on total population of 189		— 98 840 or — 31 5 per cent

Variations in the population

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III—*continued*

Indigenous castes and tribes—continued.

Indigenous Castes.	SIBSAGAR.			LAKHIMPUR.			TOTAL.		
	Number returned in 1891	Number returned in 1901	Difference + or —	Number returned in 1891.	Number returned in 1901.	Difference + or —	Number returned in 1891	Number returned in 1901.	Difference + or —
		3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10
Abor —	—	—	—	317	317	+ [illegible]	317	317	[illegible]
Akom —	87,468	[illegible]	13,[illegible]	46,[illegible]	28,[illegible]	+ 3,[illegible]	133,[illegible]	177,[illegible]	+ 44,[illegible]
Aktor —	[illegible]	84	— [illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	84	[illegible]
Assamese —	—	—	—	18	37	+ 19	18	37	[illegible]
Barua Brahman —	403	35	— 368	73	38	— 35	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]
Borja —	8,[illegible]	8,[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	333	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ 3,[illegible]
Brahman —	19,[illegible]	14,[illegible]	4,[illegible]	2,[illegible]	2,[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ 8,[illegible]
Chutiya —	34,[illegible]	37,[illegible]	+ 3,[illegible]	7,[illegible]	17,[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]
Dafla —	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Doania —	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	731	+ [illegible]	7[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dom (Nadiyal) —	23,[illegible]	23,[illegible]	— [illegible]	12,[illegible]	14,[illegible]	+ 2,[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	— 7,[illegible]
Gamak —	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]
Gara —	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hari (British Bania)	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hira —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hojai —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jogi (Tanti) —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kachari —	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]
Kalbortia —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kalita —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kaymarka —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kewat (Mahanya Vaisya) —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Khand —	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kock —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lalung —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mahajan —	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Malak —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mach —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mikir —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mol —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Morang —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Morua —	[illegible]	—	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Moria —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mukki —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nawmandra or Chamdal —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nol —	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nora —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Patra —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Phukal —	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Rabha —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Rajbansi —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sakal —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Saraka (Sweet) —	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Shan —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sonapho —	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	— [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Subansiri —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tiwa —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Toda —	—	—	—	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Turung —	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—	—	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total —	333,[illegible]	385,[illegible]	[illegible]	151,[illegible]	184,[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Added or deducted owing to transfer of area.	[illegible]	—	— [illegible]	—	—	—	+ [illegible]	—	— [illegible]
	[illegible] 73·8 per cent. on the total population of 1891.	—	[illegible] or + [illegible] per cent.	— 60·3 per cent. on the total population of 1891	—	— or 79·7 per cent.	[illegible] 79·4 per cent. on the total population of 1891	—	— [illegible] or — [illegible] per cent.

Represents the population in 1891 of the area transferred from the Naga Hills, less 2,000 persons, the estimated number of Nagas living there.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Indigenous languages

—	ASSAMESE		GARO		HOJAI		BODO		LALUNG.		MIKIR.		MIRI		CHUTIA.		TOTAL.		DIFFERENCE	PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE OR DECREASE.
	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901	1891	1901		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
mrup .	515,905	489,762	5,101	5,452	.		85,712	67,253	2,060	1,052	12,193	8,026	1	1			620,972	571,546	— 49,426	— 7 95
rrang	185,356	171,394	631	597		.	63,869	55,003	4	3	2,362	3,108	2,509	3,471		3	254,731	233,579	— 21,152	— 8 30
wgong	225,496	171,258	1,025	1,023	2,773	137	14,205	6,385	35,373	12,612	44,833	34,273	63	1	2		323,770	225,689	— 98,081	—30 29
bsagar	321,679	353,896	434	427			4,105	2,810	2		1,013	439	14,105	14,752	.	1,091	341,338	373,415	+ 32,077	+ 9 39
khimpur .	127,443	146,115	50	10			1,248	2,207	39	2	21	1	18,852	22,247	4	1,270	147,657	171,852	+ 24,195	+16 38
otal .	1,375,879	1,332,425	7,241	7,509	2,773	137	169,139	133,658	37,478	13,669	60,422	45,847	35,530	40,472	6	2,364	1,688,468	1,576,081	—112,387	— 6 65

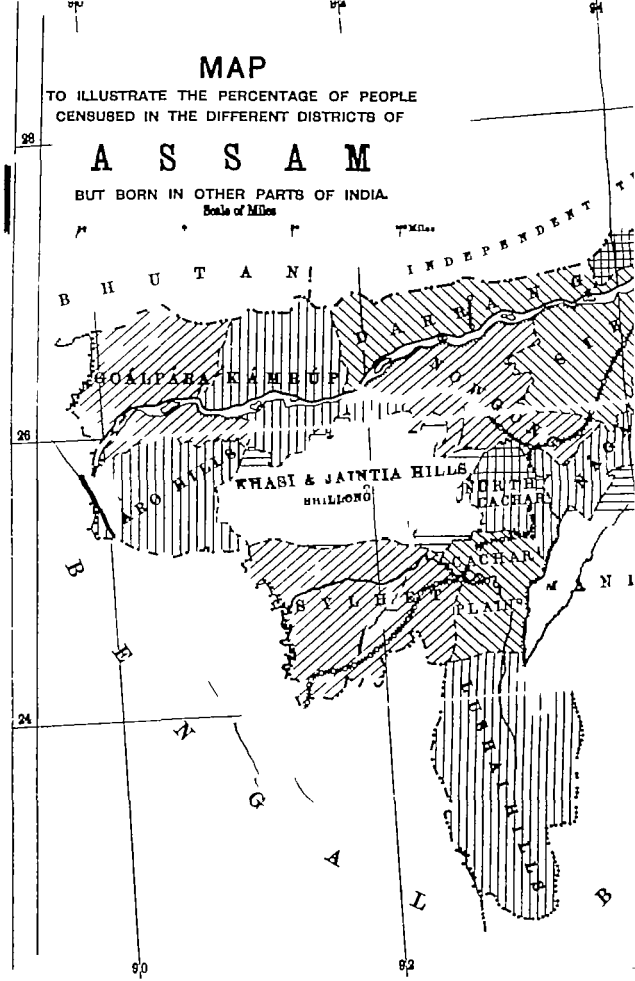
Sibsagar, 1901 { 1,088 persons speaking Assamese transferred from the Naga Hills to Sibsagar have not been included
22,364 " " Mikir language " " " " "
Total 23,452 }

Variations in the population

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

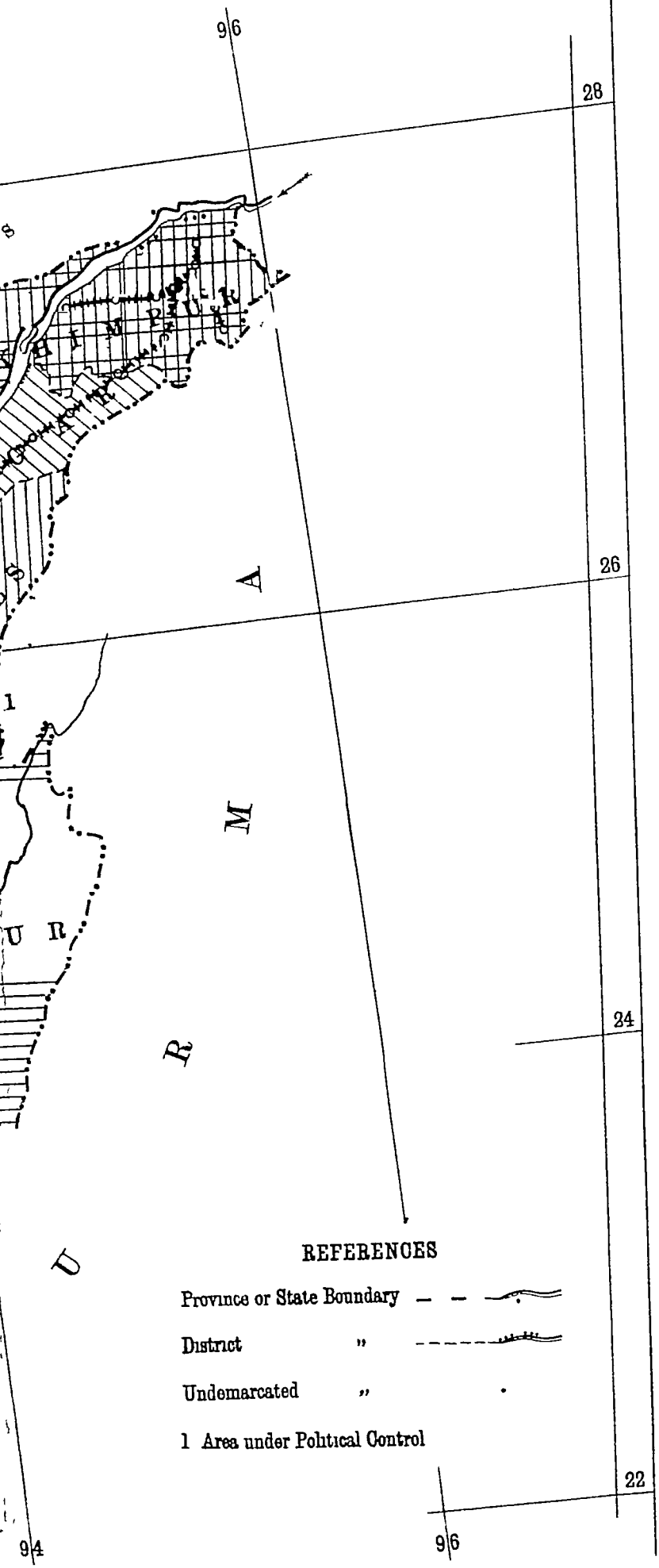
Comparison of actual and estimated population

lations the population	Natural divisions and districts.	Actual population by Census, 901	Population estimated from vital statistics.	Population estimated from rate of increase, 88 89	Actual population by Census, 89
	1		3	4	5
	Cachar Plain	414 781	436 267	459,890	367 542
	Sylhet	2 241 848	2,306,349	2,357 670	2,154,593
	Total Surma Valley	2,656,629	2 742 616	2,817,560	2,522 135
	Goalpara ..	462 052	454-357	459,405	452,773
	Kamrup ..	589,187	598,581	623,716	634,249
	Darrang ..	337 313	351,466	350,980	307,440
	Nowgong ..	261 160	304,098	384,838	347,307
	Sibsagar	597 969	594,965	593,595	480 659
	Lakhimpur	371 396	404,662	359,612	354,033
	Total Brahmaputra V lley..	2,619,077	2 708 129	2,772,146	2,476,481
	Total Plain ..	5,275,706	5,450,745	5,589,706	4,998,616
	Lushai Hills ..	82,434	..	...	43,634
	North Cachar	40,812	..	7,831	18,941
	Naga Hills	102,402	..	125,805	96,637
	Khasi and Jaintia Hills	202,250		23 ,259	197,904
	Garo Hills	138,274		134,911	121 570
	Total Hill Districts ..	566 172	...	509,806	478,686
	Manipur State ...	284,465			..
	Total Provi ce	6,126,343	..	6 099,512	5,477,300



Reg. No. 18, Census, Comm. Assam.—Feb. 27.—1,000.

Exterior Eastern Boundary in accordance with trace recd. with the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam s



Percentage of people Censused in the different Districts of the Province but born in other parts of India—

	%
Lakhimpur	41 2
North Cachar	40 5
Sibsagar	25 4
Darrang	25 1
Cachar Plains	24 4
Nowgong	11 3
Goalpara	9 0
Sylhet	7 4
Lushai Hills	5 8
Garo Hills	3 9
Kamrup	2 4
Naga Hills	2 2
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	1 7
Manipur	0·9

REFERENCE

Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Manipur	under 2 %
Lushai Hills, Garo Hills, Kamrup, Naga Hills	2—6 %
Nowgong, Goalpara, Sylhet	7—12 %
Sibsagar, Darrang, Cachar Plains	24—26 %
Lakhimpur, North Cachar Hills	40 % and over

Photo S I O Calcutta.

CHAPTER III

BIRTH PLACE

Birth place

58 I have already referred to interdistrict migration and to the influx of foreigners into Assam, as without doing so it would have been impossible to ascertain the variation that had taken place in the indigenous population but at that stage of the proceedings the actual birth place of the foreigner, provided that he was a foreigner, was immaterial, and the real object of the chapter would have been to some extent obscured by an enquiry into the province or country in which he first saw the light As, however, nearly 13 per cent of the persons censused in Assam on March 1st were born outside the province, it is a matter of some interest to ascertain the countries from which they come

59 The total number of immigrants is 775,844 and the percentage born in each of the great 'exporting' provinces is shown in the statement in the margin Nearly 65 per cent of the whole come from the neighbouring province of Bengal, 14 per cent from the North-Western Provinces, and 10 8 per cent from the Central Provinces, but no other single province or State sends as many as 3 per cent of the total number

Provinces from which immigrants come	Percentage of immigrants born in the principal areas of recruitment
Bengal	64·9
North Western Provinces.	14 0
Central Provinces	10·8
Madras ..	2·7
Nepal	2 7
Rewa ...	1·3
Rajputana	1·2
All other places	2·4
Total ..	100 0

Bengal

60 Bengal sends just over half a million emigrants to Assam, who are distributed under the nine divisions of that province in the second statement appended to this chapter Half of the total number come from Chota Nagpur, and Burdwan, Patna and Bhagalpur account for over three-fifths of the remainder Broadly speaking, these immigrants are divided into two classes There are of course a certain proportion of traders, clerks and other educated men, who have come in search of employment to Assam, but their total number is but small, and the great majority of immigrants are either garden coolies or agriculturists, who have crossed the frontier in search of land. The last named class will obviously be found in greatest force in Sylhet and Goalpara, while persons who are censused in large numbers in Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, or Darrang, and not in the border districts, may, as a rule, be assumed to be coolies The following instance will clearly show the way in which the difference between the two classes of immigrants is brought out in the census tables No less than 69,323 of the persons censused in Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur returned their birth place as Lohardaga, whereas in Goalpara there were only 284 immigrants from this district, but these three great tea districts between them only contained 161 natives of Rangpur, though there were 15,611 persons born in this district and censused in Goalpara, and it is obvious that we shall not be far wrong if we assume that natives of Lohardaga are garden coolies, and natives of Rangpur cultivators By applying this principle, it appears that immigrants from Chota Nagpur, Burdwan, Patna, Bhagalpur and Orissa come up to tea gardens, while those from Dacca, Rajshahi, Chittagong and the Presidency are cultivators, clerks and traders. The former class number 420,785, or 83 6 per cent of the whole, the latter 80,958, or 16 per cent The principal districts from which coolies come are Lohardaga (91,794), Manbhum (69,728), and Hazaribagh (68,772), while persons other than coolies are most numerous from Mymensingh (22,056), Rangpur (17,321), Dacca and Tipperah

The other main provinces.

61 One hundred and eight thousand and nine hundred persons were born in the North-Western Provinces, the principal 'exporting' districts being Ghazipur (42,772) and Azamgarh (20,604), Jaunpur, with 8,677, being next on the list The Central Provinces have sent us 84,170 men and women, over 40,000 of whom were born in the two districts of Bilaspur and Jubbulpore, and over 9,000 in Sambalpur, while of Madrasis, there were 21,571, nearly 18,000 of whom came from the single district of Ganjam The only other provinces of India calling for special mention are the Punjab and Bombay, which were returned by 6,214 and 1,407 persons, respectively, most of whom were attracted to the province by the Assam-Bengal Railway

place.

Objects with which immigrants come to Assam.

62. I have already shown that more than three-fourths of the emigrants from Bengal were originally brought up to the tea plantations of the province, and we probably should not be far wrong in classifying as garden coolies all persons born in the North Western Provinces the Central Provinces, Madras and Rewa.* Some of these people no doubt have come to Assam as clerks or traders, but the number cannot be large, and in all probability is fully counterbalanced by coolie immigrants from places other than those specified above.† If this assumption is correct no less than 645 000 ‡ or 83 per cent., of the foreigners in Assam were brought up to the province as garden coolies though, as will be shown later on a considerable proportion have since been absorbed into the general population The natives of Nepal of whom there are 21,347 are either serving in the Gurkha regiments and Military Police battalions, or are earning their living as herdsmen, and in some cases as cultivators, while the emigrants from Rajputana are the shrewd Marwari merchants who have monopolized the trade of the Brahmaputra Valley Turning to the Asiatic countries beyond India, we find that, if we leave Nepal out of consideration the largest number of immigrants come from Afghanistan 1 101; Burma, 1 666; Bhutan 919; and Baluchistan, 655 The Kabulis are the great pedlars of the province and come up every year with loads of piece-goods, dried fruits and similar articles which they hawk about through the villages and tea gardens, but those who were censused in the North Cachar Hills were probably all working on the railway and the same holds good of the natives of Baluchistan The Bhutanese are temporary visitors, who only come down from their hills in the cold weather to trade, and the great majority of the emigrants from Burma are cultivators, who have moved from the Chin into the Lushai Hills. The total number of Europeans was 1 340 of whom 844 were born in England 26 in Wales 319 in Scotland, and 98 in Ireland but these 1,287 persons do not represent the total number of the British, many of whom were born outside the British Isles

Distribution of immigrants in the natural divisions of Assam.

63. The statement in the margin shows the distribution of the immigrants from the four chief provinces between the Brahmaputra and Surma Valleys The majority of the natives of the North Western Provinces go to Sylhet and Cachar as they do not thrive in Assam Proper but the Brahmaputra Valley absorbs the greater number of the immigrants from Bengal and the Central Provinces while Madras is fairly evenly divided between the two divisions.

Percentage of immigrants from—	Out-residents	
	Surma Valley	Brahmaputra Valley
Bengal ...	82·3	67·7
North-Western Provinces ...	67·2	32·8
Central Provinces ...	36	64
Madras ...	51	49

Increase in immigration.

64 Subsidiary Table III appended to this chapter shows that the foreign born population has increased by 265 172 or 51·9 per cent. during the last ten years. The number of persons born in Bengal and censused in Assam has increased by 85,516 or 20·4 per cent. but the most striking feature in the return is the enormous development in immigration from the Central Provinces. In 1891 there were only 3 844 natives of these provinces censused in Assam, but the number has now risen to 84,170. Immigrants from the North Western Provinces have also increased by 34·5 per cent., and those from Madras have more than doubled. There is a great increase in the number of natives of Rajputana, and as almost the whole business of the Brahmaputra Valley is in the hands of these Marwari merchants, the local distribution indicates clearly the effect of the tea industry upon trade in general. Gauhati contains an important bazar and is the centre of the mustard trade in Lower Assam but the number of natives of Rajputana in Kamrup has only increased by 288 during the last ten years whereas in the three great tea districts—Darrang Sibsagar and Lakhimpur—the figures have risen from 2 617 to 5 957

Thirty two per cent of the total increase in immigration is due to Bengal 30 per cent. to the Central Provinces and 19 per cent. to the North Western Provinces, after which there is a large drop to Madras (4 per cent.)

Proportion of foreigners to total population.

65. Subsidiary Table III shows that out of every 1 000 persons censused in Assam on March 1st 1901 no less than 126 were born outside its boundaries a proportion which is higher than that for any province in India in 1891 except Lower Burma (129) and

* A few thousands are working on the railways under construction in the province.

† Five thousand and eighteen persons who were censused on tea-gardens are born in Nepal and the four divisions of Bengal from each coolies are not supposed to come

‡ Bengal (five divisions)	420,785
North-Western Provinces	98,900
Central Provinces	84,170
Madras	571
Rewa	0,374
Total	645,700

is very much in excess of that for the whole of India in that year (32). As I have already explained, the tea industry is mainly responsible for this influx of population, which has grown in volume at each successive census, the proportion of foreigners in 1891 being only 93, and in 1881, 57, but there are indications which suggest that the tide has now reached the flood, and it does not seem likely that the proportion of foreigners will increase very largely during the next few years Since 1891, the area under tea in Assam has increased by 46 per cent, with the natural result that there has been a serious fall in prices, and a diminution of profits, and no great development of the industry is to be expected, at any rate in the near future The proportion of foreigners (persons born outside the province) is highest in Lakhimpur, where they form no less than 41 per cent of the population, Sibsagar and Darrang (25 per cent), and Cachar (24 per cent), and all of these districts contain a large number of gardens Sylhet, though it is an important centre of the tea industry, which has imported into the district over 141,000 persons of the coolie class during the last ten years, and, though it receives a considerable number of immigrants from Mymensingh, Tipperah and Dacca, has such a large indigenous population that foreigners only form 7 per cent of the total, whereas in Goalpara, where the immigrants are all of the cultivating class, the proportion is as high as 9 per cent In Kamrup, there are but few tea gardens, and little or no immigration of Bengali cultivators, with the result that 98 per cent of the people censused there were indigenous to the province, and the same proportion is found in the Naga and Khasi and Jaintia Hills, while in Manipur foreigners form less than 1 per cent of the total population

Birth place

As compared with the important question of immigration from outside, the movements of the population within the province are of little interest The Cachar plains have the largest proportion of immigrants from other districts, as they form as much as 6 per cent of the total population, in Darrang they are 5, and in Lakhimpur 4 per cent In Kamrup and Sylhet, they are less than 1 per cent of the whole, and in Nowgong less than 2 The causes which produce these varying results will be discussed later on, and it only remains to consider the population from the point of view of the district born, for which figures are also available in Statement I

Leaving North Cachar out of consideration, it appears that the proportion of persons born and censused in the district is lowest where the effect of the tea industry is most pronounced In Lakhimpur, the rate is as low as 55 per cent, in Sibsagar* and the Cachar plains it is 69, in Darrang 70, but in Sylhet and Kamrup, for reasons which have been already given, it is as high as 92 and 97 In the hill districts, there is little movement of population, and in no district is it below 90, while in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills it rises to 96 per cent

66 The total number of persons who are estimated to have originally come to Assam to work on tea gardens is 645,000, and it is interesting to trace the extent to which they are being absorbed into the general population I have accordingly compiled totals for persons born in the coolie-exporting provinces, and censused in the villages, as distinct from the towns, gardens, and railway works, of seven out of the eight plains districts I have omitted towns and railways, as, though coolies undoubtedly drift to these places, they also contain a certain number of immigrants who have come to Assam for trade or other purposes, but in rural areas there are practically no foreigners other than *ex*-cooles or cultivators,—and we are fairly safe, I think, in assuming that the last-named class only come from the four divisions of Bengal which have been omitted from the sstatement in the margin The total number is 121,368, and, as Mr Gait calculated that there were 97,113 such persons in the whole province in 1891, it is evident that during the last ten years there has been an increase of at least a quarter of a lakh in the number of those who came to Assam as coolies and settled down as cultivators This does not of course represent the total extent to which the tea industry is colonizing the province, as the children of these persons have to be taken into consideration, and it must also be borne in mind that merely to fill the vacancies caused by death, and to keep the figures at the level of 1891 would require an annual exodus of about 4,000 persons from the gardens, so that, assuming that the total increase was distributed equally over the ten years, the number of persons who must have passed every year from the gardens to the villages is no less than 7,000. These figures are confirmed by the returns showing the land held by *ex*-garden coolies compiled by the revenue department, which show in the Assam Valley alone an average increase during the last ten years† of a little over 5,000 acres a year The proportion of

Settlement of garden coolies

Persons born in the Central Provinces, North Western Provinces Madras Rewa and five divisions of Bengal, and censused in the villages of—

Cachar	19 056
Sylhet " "	16 419
Kamrup "	2 758
Darrang ...	15,817
Nowgong " ...	6 846
Sibsagar ... "	23,754
Lakhimpur	32 718
Total	121,368

* Had it not been for transfers of territory, the positions of Sibsagar and Darrang would have been reversed

birth place. foreign born *ex*-garden coolies amongst the villagers is becoming very appreciable. In Sibsagar in spite of a considerable Assamese population they form nearly 7 per cent in Tezpur sadr they are 13 and in the Lakhimpur district nearly 15 per cent. of the village population

Sexes of immigrants.

67 Subsidiary Table IV shows the proportion of the sexes amongst immigrants. The proportion of women coming from the Central Provinces is positively larger than that of men there being 1 054 of the former to every 1,000 of the latter but there is a considerable preponderance of the female sex in the country from which they come. From Rewa (967) Madras (891) and Bengal (819) the proportion is fairly even, but from the North Western Provinces (660) where women are in a minority it is low Very few women come from Nepal the Panjab Rajputana, and Bombay but the natives of these places are for the most part temporary visitors who leave their wives and children in the homes to which like the English *they hope to return at the conclusion of their* service.

Inter-district migration.

68 The annexed diagram shows the gain and loss to each district by inter-district migration which, in comparison with the really important question of emigration from outside the province, is of but little interest, and can be dismissed in a few paragraphs.

Cachar.

69 Cachar including North Cachar sends out 7 259 emigrants, and receives 28 988 the net gain being 21,729. The majority of emigrants go to Sylhet and the Naga Hills and are no doubt cultivators who move their homes across the district boundary and the same, presumably holds good of the immigrants the great majority of whom come from the neighbouring district of Sylhet (25 971) and the State of Manipur

Sylhet.

70 Sylhet loses 23,587 persons, receiving 5 271 immigrants in place of the 28 858 emigrants sent to other parts of the province. As, however this district is the most densely peopled in Assam, it is only natural that it should lose by inter-district migration Almost the whole of it is carried on with Cachar though there is a certain amount of movement across the Khasi and Jaintia Hills boundary and Sylhetis who make good clerks and are enterprising traders, are found though in small numbers, in most of the districts of the province.

Goalpara.

71 Goalpara is another district that loses by inter-district transfers, the emigrants exceeding the immigrants by 7,293. Nearly all the immigrants come from Kamrup (4,891) and the Garo Hills (2 183), and the latter district absorbs more than *half the emigrants* (7 923) the remainder having either crossed the boundary into Kamrup or gone up the valley to seek for work on tea gardens. In 1891 the result of inter-district transfers between Kamrup and Goalpara was in favour of the former district, but owing to the damage done by floods in Barpeta, the positions have now been completely reversed.

Kamrup.

72 Kamrup loses nearly as heavily as Sylhet by emigration as it only receives 5 203 persons in place of the 25 835 censused in other parts of the province. The great majority of the immigrants come from Goalpara, Nowgong and Darrang, while the emigrants go to Goalpara as cultivators and to the four upper districts partly as ordinary *raiyats* and partly to work on tea gardens. The number of persons born in Kamrup and censused in other dis *tricts is 50 per cent. greater than in 1891 but the conditions of the district have been* such that it is a matter for surprise that the increase in emigration has not been even greater

Darrang.

73. Darrang gains 13,182 persons, as very few people leave the district and there has been considerable immigration from Kamrup (7 260), Nowgong (5,278) and over 1 200 people have crossed the river from Sibsagar Judging from the disproportion between the sexes, about 4,000 of the persons who have come from Kamrup are Kachari coolies, working on tea gardens, but the rest of the immigrants are probably ordinary *raiyats* The emigration from the Kachari mauzas of Mangaldai is less than I should have expected, only 1 222 persons born in Darrang being censused in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur and it *is evident that coolies have no difficulty in getting employment* in their own district.

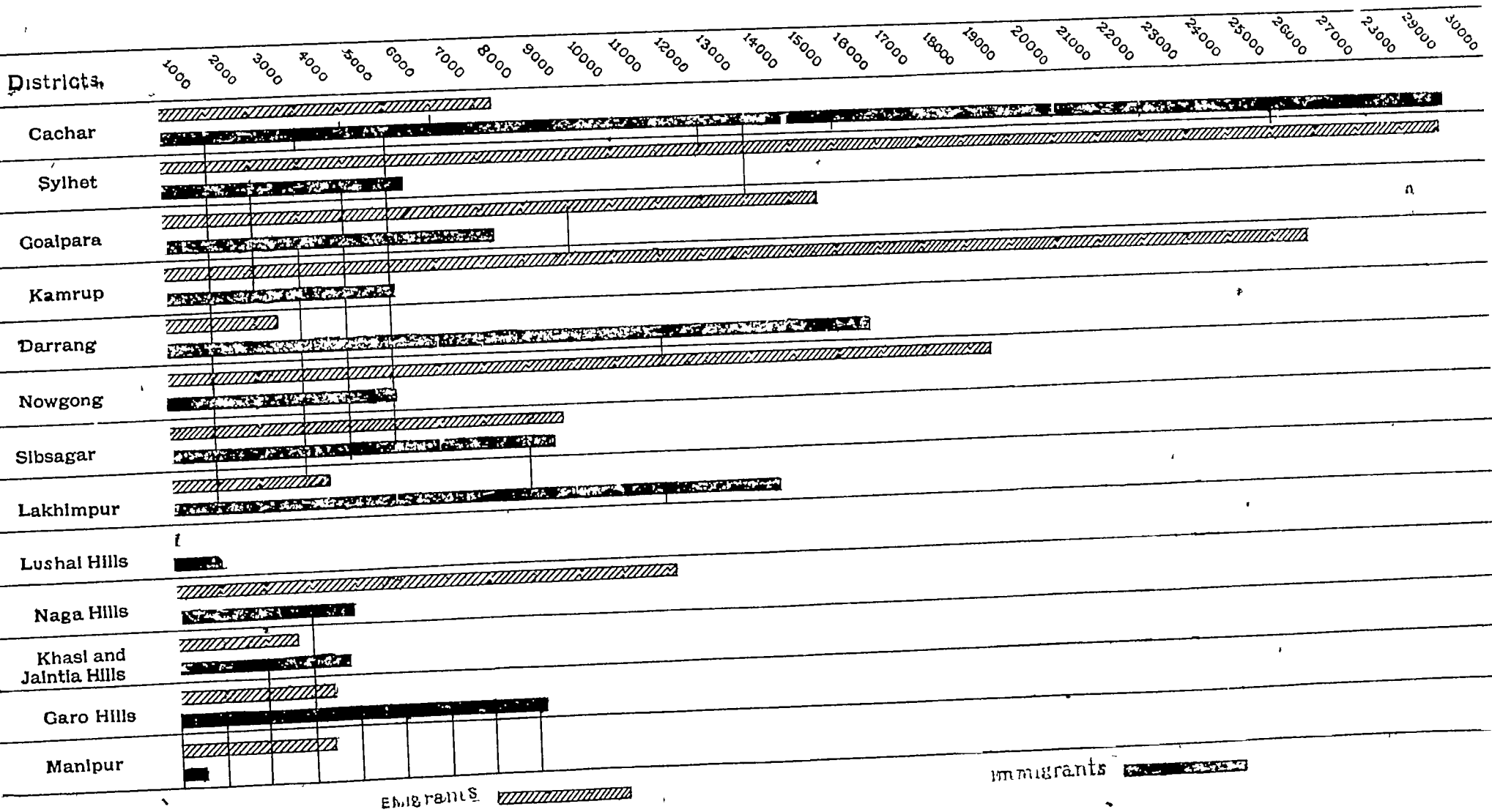
Nowgong.

74 Nowgong, as is natural, loses considerably by interdistrict transfers, the emigrants (15,257) standing to the immigrants in the proportion of nearly three to one. Most of the immigrants have come from Kamrup and Goalpara, and are presumably temporary visitors, working

This excludes the population of the area transferred to Sibsagar

Diagram illustrating the results of interdistrict migration.

Each division represents one thousand persons



on tea gardens, as it is difficult to understand why any one should voluntarily go and settle in this much afflicted district, though the desire to leave its fever-stricken villages which evidently inspired the 5,278 persons who moved across the river to Darrang, and the 7,208 people who entered Sibsagar is quite comprehensible The increase in migration to the latter district is very considerable, and in view of the contagious character of *kalá-ázár* can hardly be regarded with equanimity by the local authorities, but I am inclined to think that a large number of the persons shown as born in Nowgong and censused in Sibsagar have not really moved their homes at all, but were living in the area transferred from the Naga Hills to that district

Birth place.

Sibsagar

75 It is not possible to show with absolute accuracy the results of interdistrict migration upon this district, as a certain proportion of the inhabitants of the area transferred from the Naga Hills and Nowgong have apparently, whether rightly or wrongly, returned themselves as born in Sibsagar The total number of emigrants is 8,762, seven-eighths of whom go to the neighbouring districts of Lakhimpur and Darrang, where the density of population to the square mile is much lower than in the Sadr and Jorhat subdivisions

Lakhimpur

76 Lakhimpur is a sparsely-populated and very progressive district, and, as is natural, the immigrants largely exceed the emigrants in numbers Most of the latter are cultivators who have crossed the boundary into Sibsagar, but the result of the migration between these two districts is very much in favour of the more easterly of the two The immigrants come for the most part from Sibsagar (6,730), and Kamrup (3,623), the great majority of the latter being no doubt Kachari coolies working on tea gardens

The Hill Districts

77 There is very little movement into or out of the hills A few settlers from Manipur have entered the Lushai country, and Sylhet and the Khasi Hills have exchanged a few hundred persons, but the only district where migration has gone on to any appreciable extent is the Garo Hills, where over 10,000 persons have crossed the boundary between that district and Goalpara, the net results of the transfer being largely in favour of the Garo Hills

Emigration

78 The statement in the margin shows the number of persons born in Assam and censused in the various Provinces and States from which returns have been received The total number of emigrants is 51,323, as compared with 43,611 in 1891, so that there has been but little increase in emigration during the decade

Statement showing the emigrants from Assam to other Provinces of India

Number of persons born in Assam and censused in—	
India ..	51,323
Ajmir Merwara ..	18
Baroda State	6
Bengal	48,299
Bombay	54
Burma ..	1,053
Central Provinces	197
Madras	153
North Western Provinces and Oudh ..	830
Punjab ..	103
Rajputana	8
Cochin State ..	2
Coorg	1

Bengal has absorbed 94 per cent of the whole, and the immense majority of these persons were born in Sylhet and Goalpara and censused in the neighbouring districts of Mymensingh, Tipperah, Hill Tipperah and Kuch Behar They thus belong rather to the category of inter-district than inter-provincial migrants, and have probably only moved a short distance from their former homes Only 195 persons born in Assam were censused in the Chota Nagpur division,—a fact which suggests that the proportion of garden coolies who return to their native villages is small, as otherwise we should find in these districts a considerable number of children who had been born in this province and accompanied their parents back to Bengal Calcutta contained 2,630 natives of Assam,—a number which, considering all the circumstances, is certainly no larger than one would expect

h place.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I.

Immigration per 10 000 of population

Districts.	Born in			Percentage of immigrants from outside the province to total population.		
	districts where enumerated.	the province outside the district.	countries or districts outside the province.	Total.	Males.	Females.
	3		4	5	6	7
Cachar Plains	6 944	615	2,441	24 4	12 7	11 7
Sylhet	9,241	24	735	7 3	3 8	3 5
Goalpara ..	8 938	160	902	9 0	6 3	2 7
Kamrup ..	9 672	88	24	2 4	1 7	0 7
Darrang	7,022	466	2,512	25 1	13 6	11 5
Nowgong	8,669	197	1 134	11 3	6 7	4 6
Sibsagar	6,929	536	2,535	25 3	13 8	11 5
Lakhimpur ...	5,519	365	4 116	41 1	22 7	18 4
Lushai Hills ..	9,281	138	581	5 8	4 9	1 8
North Cachar	5,099	856	4,045	40 4	33 4	7 0
Naga Hills ..	9,408	376	216	2 1	1 7	0 4
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ..	9 640	189	171	1 7	1 3	0 4
Garo Hills ..	9,014	591	395	3 9	2 3	1 6
Manipur	9,886	23	91	0 9	0 8	0 09
Total Province	..		..	12 6	7 1	5 5

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II.

Immigrants into Assam from the several divisions of Bengal.

Divisions.	Number of immigrants.	Percentage on the total immigrants from Bengal.
1 Burdwan( )	53,787	10 7
2. Presidency(b)	5,790	1 1
3. Rajshahi(c)	22,833	4 5
4. Dacca	36,924	7 3
5. Chittagong(d)	15,405	3 1
6. Patna( )	52,386	10 4
7 Bhagalpur	5 785	10 3
8. Orissa	9,477	1 9
9. Chota Nagpur	253,350	50 3
10. Bengal unspecified	2, 33	0 4
Total Bengal	503,876	100

(a) Includes Chandernagore (4).
(b) the city of Calcutta.
(c) Includes Kuch Behar (1,247).
(d) Hill Tipperah ( ).

( ) Includes Behar unspecified (14).

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III.

Increase in immigrant en.

Provinces.	1891.	1901	Difference.	Percentage on —	Percentage of increase on total increase.
	3	4	5	6	
Bengal ..	418,360	503,876	85,516	20 4	37 3
Central Provinces ..	2,241	84,170	82,329	3,673	35 9
North-Western Provinces	27,871	108,520	81,649	292	35 6
Madras ..	10,654	21,571	10,917	102 4	4 7
Punjab ..	898	6,214	5,316	592 3	2 3
Afghanistan ..	139	191	52	+ 37 4	0 2
British Isles ..	831	262	569	+ 68 5	0 2
Rajputana ..	4,877	8,334	3,457	+ 70 9	1 5
Nepal ..	337	11,347	8,979	2,663	3 9
Elsewhere ..	2,723	18,044	+ 15,321	562 5	6 7
Total ..	510,872	772,844	265,972	51 9	—

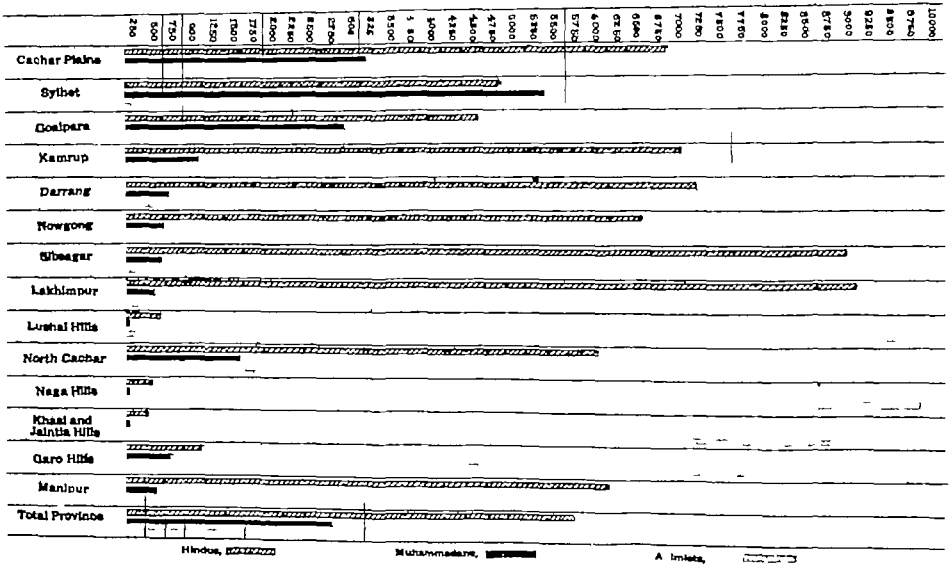
SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Proportion of foreign females to 1,000 foreign males.

Provinces.	Females to 1,000 males.
Bengal ..	892
North-Western Provinces ..	884
Central Provinces ..	1,044
Madras ..	898
Nepal ..	308
Punjab ..	3[illegible]
Rajputana ..	3[illegible]
Burma ..	3[illegible]
Afghanistan ..	[illegible]
British Isles ..	7[illegible]
Bombay ..	2[illegible]
Total immigrants ..	777

Diagram showing the proportions of the population under the three main religions, Hinduism, Muhammadanism and Animism

Each division represents 250 units



CHAPTER IV

RELIGION

Religion.

79 In 1891, the schedule form contained a separate column for sect, but the information obtained was thought to be so unreliable that no attempt was made to tabulate the figures returned At the last census, the Government of India dispensed with a separate column for sect, and left it to the discretion of Local Governments in the case of non-Christian sects, (1) either to omit the return altogether, (2) to record particular sects about which it was thought desirable to obtain information, or (3) to record all sects, but to abstract those only which were thought to be of special importance. It was the third course which was adopted in Assam, and enumerators were instructed to record, whenever possible, the sects of Hindus and Muhammadans, as well as of Christians, the religion only being entered in those cases in which the person enumerated could not say to what sect he belonged. In the abstracting office, the following sects were selected for tabulation Vaishnavas, Sivaites, Saktists, Sunnis, Shiahs, Wahabis, or Ahli-ha-dis, and the Vaishnavas were again subdivided into those who were Mahapurushias and those who were not, the enumerators having been directed to record the sub sect as well as the sect of Vaishnavas

Information recorded at the census

80 I doubt, however, whether much reliance can be placed upon the return of sect, as a very large proportion of the population can give no clear and intelligible account of the faith that is in them, and the accuracy of the tables would probably have been increased had the number of persons shown as Hindus, and nothing more, been larger In Upper Assam, the distinctions between Saktism and Vaishnavism are not very clearly marked, and a native gentleman in Sibsagar goes so far as to assert that the Assamese Vaishnavas are in reality more Saktas than Vaishnavas, as they not unfrequently indulge in animal sacrifice, a form of worship strictly prohibited by the reformer Chaitanya, to whom all life was sacred A similar laxity in practice is said to prevail in parts of Sylhet, and in both valleys there is a large immigrant population of the coolie class, who are much addicted to the consumption of liquor and of meat These persons could not, as a rule, specify the sect to which they belonged, and I found a certain tendency amongst the enumerators to make the eating of meat the *shibboleth* of the Saktist persuasion, and to enter all meat-eaters under that head, though the persons concerned had up to that moment been as ignorant of the fact that they were Saktists as M Jourdain was that he talked prose In the case of the converted hill tribes of the Assam Valley, this test was even more unsatisfactory The Gosains, who are the great proselytizing agency in Assam Proper, are almost all of them adherents of the Vaishnavite creed, but their converts have for generations been accustomed to a nourishing diet of pig and rice-beer, which they cannot abandon without a struggle, in which the flesh is frequently the victor. To enter these persons as Saktists, because they from time to time revert to the diet of their ancestors, is obviously incorrect, and it would have been better, if in all cases they had been returned as 'Hindus, unspecified' Many orthodox members of that community would no doubt be disposed to deny them this title, but the instructions issued did not allow the enumerator any discretion, as he was told to accept the statement of the person concerned, and to enter as such all those who declared themselves to be Hindus, whatever his own opinion of the applicability of the term might be

Difficulties of the return

81 Assam is probably best known to the Hindu world for the various temples and shrines in the Kamrup district connected with the Saktist religion This side of Hinduism concerns itself with the procreative force as manifested in the female, and, according to a text of the Tantras, the most acceptable form of worship is the adoration of a naked woman,* though substitutes can, if necessary, be found in the *yantra*, or triangular plate of brass or copper, or in a triangle painted on a copper dish Saktists are divided into the Dakshinacharis, or moderates, who do not offer wine to the deity, Bamacharis, who offer wine and meat, and the Kaulas, or extremists, whose worship comprises the fivefold *makara*, *i e*, flesh, fish (the emblem of ovarian fertility), intoxicating liquor, sexual intercourse, and mystical gesticulations † One explanation of the Saktist

The Hindu sects Saktism.

* Or, according to another translation, "a virgin who has not yet attained puberty."

† Or, according to another translation, "fried articles of food."

ligion. doctrines is that the lusts of the flesh prevent communion with God and that the best way to overcome them is to indulge them to satiety This theory is, however opposed to the general experience of life, and even assuming that the primitive desires can be killed by excessive indulgence the worn-out debauchee who is the result can hardly be considered an admirable object either from the physical or spiritual point of view Those who are not Hindus would be more disposed to accept the explanation of Babu Jogendra Nath Bhattacharyya, M.A D L., President of the College of Pandits Nadiya, who suggests that the Tantric religion was invented to justify the habit of drinking which prevailed amongst Brahmans and to enable them to compete with the secular courtiers in the struggle for the favour of the King* The apologists of Hinduism however put forward as an alternative explanation that its teachers, realising that the primitive desires can be controlled but cannot be eradicated associated their gratification with religious worship with the object of restraining them as far as possible, and the close connection between religion and the most everyday incidents of Hindu life lends a certain amount of support to this theory

Babu Padmanath Bhattacharyya Bidyabinod M.A., has supplied me with the following orthodox view of the origin of the religion; but it is obvious that, even though the intentions of the original founders of the creed may have been good, there is great risk of laxity and corruption creeping in to such a form of worship:

As to the origin of th T ntras it is said that, as Vedic rites were inefficacious in this Kaliyuga (iron age) the Tantras were promulgated by Siva for the benefit of the seekers after God. Of course there are so n heterodox T ntras, and as t the origi it is said that as the asuras had begu to achieve might by practising the rites as inculcated by the Tantras, some evil ones were created to beguile them, so that by following them the asuras might only dig their own graves. It is, to my mind only the crying for more light that led to the origi of the Tantras The climax of all philosophy viz the Vedanta, declare that th preme Brahma was identical with the Psyche i every creature, and that, the final dissolution f the self cons sted in nifying the two. The Tantras took thei cue from that, and showed how to do it in a more practical way than the Yoga Shastra could. The human frame was said to contai six or seven *chakras* (wheels), and the Tantras explai ed the system by which Siva and Sakti could be discovered i the body and spiritually united. The subtlety of the process itself is a proof positi e against y no Aryan origin, and if the Viracharl devotees drank win and ate flesh it was because som tim lant was required t screw their d termination to the sticki g place, a d to give them strength enough to bear the physical strain necessary for the purpos

The most famous Saktist temple of Assam is that of Kamakhya, built on a hill overhanging the Brahmaputra just west of Gauhati, at the place where the pudenda of Sati are said to have fallen when her body was cut into pieces by Vishnu. Robinson writing in 1841 describes the ritual at this temple in the following scathing terms

As soon as th well-known sound of the drum is heard calli g the people to the midnight orgies, th da c and the song, whole m lltudes assemble and the crowd becomes dense. The women employed to dance a d si g on these occasions are those consecrated t the service of the temple of whom it is reported there ar no less than five hundred. Their presence together with th ir filthy songs and more obscene dances, form the chief attractions A song is scarcely tolerated wh ch does not contain the most marked allusions to nchastity while those which are so abominable that no person could repeat them out of the temple receive in general the loudest plaudits.

During the day time, there is nothing about the temple or the people who live in the vicinity to offend the most delicate susceptibilities, but it must be admitted that the incidents commemorated at some of the festivals argue a complete want of any sense of modesty or decency in those taking part in them, and it is possible that Robinson s denunciations of the midnight orgies are not unduly severe. Other centres of Saktism are to be found in Sylhet as Sati's left leg fell in Jaintia and her neck in or near the town of Sylhet.

Sivaitism. 82. Sivaitism is the counterpart of Saktism, being the worship of the same powers as manifested in the male; but though it is the duty of a devout Hindu to worship Siva as well as the four other deities,—Sakti, Vishnu, Ganesh, and Suryya,—the natives of Assam are not as a rule initiated into his *mantra* except in conjunction with that of Sakti. There are a considerable number of temples† consecrated to Mahadeo in the Surma Valley but they have as a rule been built by Saktists or even Vaishnavas. The Jogi caste in Sylhet is noted for its Sivaite proclivities but, though a certain number of them travel through the valley as Sannyasis it is believed that they are in reality rather Saktists than Sivaites. Amongst the Assamese the sect has very few followers, and those returned in the Brahmaputra Valley are probably all foreigners.

Hindu castes and sects, page 413.

† *Vide* Kurma Purana.

‡ The principal ones are at Nemal in South Sylhet and Bidderpur The large stone temple whose ruins are situated close to Tezpur is said to hav been built in honour of Siva by Bana Raja.

Religion

Vaishnavism.

83 Sankar Deb, the apostle of Vaishnavism in Assam, was born in 1449 A D , and was the descendant of a Kayastha, who, according to tradition, had been sent, with six of his caste fellows and seven Brahmans, to Assam by the king of Kanaijpur as a substitute for the Assamese prime minister, who had fled to his court for refuge The licentious rites of Saktism had aroused his aversion while he was still a boy, and his desire to found a purer system of religion was increased by the teachings of Chaitanya in Bengal Like most reformers, he met with vehement opposition from the supporters of the established order, and he was compelled to leave his home in Nowgong and to fly to the inhospitable jungles of the Barpeta subdivision, where, in conjunction with his disciple, Madhab Deb, he founded the Mahapurushia sect, the main tenets of which are the prohibition of idolatry and sacrifice, disregard of caste and the worship of God by hymns and prayers only Sankar himself was, like a true follower of Chaitanya, a vegetarian, but the low-caste people, who formed a large proportion of his converts, found this injunction a counsel of perfection, and the Mahapurushias are accordingly allowed to eat the flesh of game, but not of domesticated animals, though, with a subtlety only too common in this country, they observe the letter of the law, prohibiting the spilling of blood, by beating their victims to death The great centre of the Mahapurushia faith is the Sattra at Barpeta, where a large number of persons persist in living, huddled together, in defiance of all the laws of sanitation, and resist with surprising pertinacity all efforts to improve their condition They are a peculiarly bigoted people, and are strongly opposed to vaccination, with the result that the mortality from small-pox in the neighbourhood of the Sattra is exceptionally high

It was not long, however, before the Brahmans re-asserted their influence, and shortly after Sankar's death, two of his followers, who were members of this caste, established sects, called, after their founders, Damodariya and Hari Deb Panthi, which are distinguished from the Mahapurushias by the respect paid to the distinctions of caste, and a certain tolerance of idolatry

A fourth sect was founded by one Gopal Deb, but it originally seems to have differed in no way from the Mahapurushia creed, and subsequently its followers adopted the teachings of Deb Damodar There is, in fact, practically no distinction between the Damodariyas, the Hari Deb Panthis, and the Gopal Deb Panthis, and the Vaishnavites of the Assam Valley can be divided into the Mahapurushia and Bamunia or 'other Vaishnavas,' as they have been called in the census tables The former will accept a Sudra as a religious guide, worship no God but Krishna, and are uncompromising in their hostility to idols , the latter will only recognize Brahmans as their Gosains, permit the adoration of other deities, such as Siva and Kali, in addition to that of Krishna, and allow sacrifices to be offered in their honour

In other parts of India, the upper classes are, as a rule, Saktists, and Vaishnavism occupies the position held by dissent in England, but this is far from being the case in the valley of the Brahmaputra The leading Vaishnavite Gosains, who live in their Sattras or colleges surrounded by their *bhakats* or monks, are men who exercise great authority over their numerous disciples, and on the whole exercise it wisely and well The two principal colleges are those of Auniati and Dakshinpat,* and there is probably no man whose word would carry greater weight with the Assamese than the Gosain of the former Sattra Nearly all the colleges hold grants of revenue-free land, and in most villages the Gosain has a medhi, or agent, who not unfrequently takes precedence of the gaonbura, the headman appointed by Government Unlike many priests, the principal Gosains have always been conspicuous for their loyalty to Government, their freedom from bigotry and the liberality of their views, and Hinduism is seldom presented in a more attractive form than that which is found in the Vaishnavite monasteries of the Majuli, the island which is formed by the confluence of the Brahmaputra and the Luhit

The Sahaj Bhajan

84 Another sect which has recently attracted some attention, especially in the Surma Valley, is the Sahaj, or Kisori Bhajan The following account is given of the Sahaj Bhajanias by the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar

The difference from other Baishnabs lies in the fact that each worshipper devotes himself to a woman whom he considers as his spiritual guide, and with whose help he expects to secure salvation for his soul His religion is a religion of love, and is not confined to any dogmas, the caste prejudice with him is much shaken, and in his festivals he mixes with all the low caste Hindus freely The Bhajanias do not touch meat and wine, and discard the worship of idols

* These Sattras are said to have been founded by the disciples of Deb Damodar, but their connection with Barpeta is, I believe, denied by the Gosains

ligion. The general opinion, however is that a good deal of license goes on under the cloak of religion and more or less indiscriminate sexual intercourse is said to be permitted at their midnight meetings The figures were only compiled for one district *i.e.*, Cachar where 2,461 persons were returned but as this sect has an evil reputation, many of its adherents were no doubt entered under other heads A similar sect is said to exist in the Assam Valley under the style of the Rati khoa Bhakats, who permit themselves great license in the gratification of their sensual cravings, and as — to quote from a native gentleman— the satisfaction of animal desires is considered to be happiness by the vulgar it is said to have a large number of followers, who would however refuse to publicly avow themselves as such.

Hinduism.

85 Fifty-six per cent. of the total population of the province are Hindus, of whom all but an insignificant proportion reside in the plains. In the Surma Valley, where the followers of the Prophet are numerous exactly half the population profess Hinduism but in the Brahmaputra Valley where the teachings of Muhammad have never made much progress, and Animism is its most serious rival 72 per cent of the people are Hindus. The gross increase in the numbers returned under this religion amounts to 14 4 per cent., but a considerable portion of this increase is due to the inclusion of the Hindus of Manipur who did not figure in the return for 1891 and if they are excluded the percentage of increase sinks to 8 7

86 The statement in the margin shows the actual increase or decrease that has taken place in the Hindu population of the eight plains districts during the last ten years. In Cachar the Hindus increased by 16 2 per cent as compared with an increase of 12 2 per cent amongst Muhammadans and a decrease of nearly 42 per cent. amongst the Animistic tribes, a large number of whom, no doubt came over to Hinduism during the last decade. That Hinduism should increase more rapidly than Islam seems at first sight strange, but this unusual phenomenon is due to the large number of Hindu immigrants who come up to the Cachar tea gardens. In Sylhet where the population is too large to be seriously affected by immigration, the Hindus have increased less rapidly than the followers of the great rival religion their numbers having risen by only 3 2 per cent during the decade as compared with 5 0 per cent. amongst the Muhammadans.

Sylhet			+[illegible]
Lakhimpur			+[illegible]
Nowgong			+ [illegible]
Cachar			+ [illegible]
Darrang			+ [illegible]
Sibsagar			+ [illegible]
Kamrup			− [illegible]
Goalpara			− [illegible]

The decrease in Goalpara is apparently due to more careful scrutiny by the enumerators of the claims of members of the aboriginal tribes to be entered as Hindus the Animistic population of the district having increased by 8 per cent. In Kamrup the same cause was probably in operation but the decrease in the Hindu population 8 4 per cent. is not much in excess of the general rate of decrease for the district (7 1) and may be due to heavier mortality amongst the followers of this religion. In Nowgong, the percentage of decrease amongst Hindus is lower than that for the district as a whole, being 21 7 against 24·8. *Kala-dzar* was however particularly deadly amongst the hill tribes in this part of Assam, and the ranks of the Hindus were to some extent reinforced by coolies who came up to work on the tea gardens and the Assam Bengal Railway In Sibsagar and Lakhimpur there is a large increase, mainly due to immigration, the figures for Muhammadans and the Animistic tribes lending no support to the theory that conversion was the cause; but in Darrang though the greater part of the increase amongst the Hindus is undoubtedly due to immigration, Hinduism has claimed a considerable number of the hill tribes the number of Hindu Kachars Rabhas, Mikirs, and Miris having risen from 4,786 to 11,089 during the last ten years

Statistics of Hindu sects.

87 Turning now to the figures for the Hindu sects, we find that out of the 3,429,099 Hindus, 2,017 828 have been returned as Vaishnavites, 702 185 as Saktists, 102,858 as Sivaites and 603,764 as Hindus unspecified. In the Surma Valley nearly half the total Hindu population are Vaishnavas, 30 per cent. are Saktists, 5 per cent. are worshippers of Siva, and nearly 16 per cent returned no sect at all In the Assam Valley Vaishnavism is the dominant creed and is followed by no less than 64 per cent of the Hindu population, while Saktism claims 15 per cent. of the whole and Siva less than 2 per cent. The figures for the Brahmaputra Valley give, however a somewhat misleading idea of the real hold of Saktism upon the people. In Kamrup which is said to have been the cradle of the Tantric worship and which is rendered sacred by the presence of numerous shrines and temples peculiarly dear to the gods less than 2 per cent. of the Hindu population have returned

themselves under this head, and it is in Upper Assam that we find this side of Hinduism most strongly represented These so-called Saktists are, however, merely coolie immigrants, who have been entered under this head, because they eat flesh and drink intoxicating liquor, though this is not so much an indication of their adherence to the goddess Kali, as of the uncertainty of their title even to the name of Hindu Amongst the Vaishnavas, also, the figures for the Mahapurushias are far from convincing It is only natural to suppose that this sect would be most numerous in the neighbourhood of the famous *Kirtanghar* at Barpeta, and would not be found in great force in Upper Assam, where the influence of the Bamunia Gosains is particularly strong The statement in the margin shows, however, that the proportion borne by the Mahapurushias to the total Hindu population is much higher in Sibsagar and Nowgong than in Lower Assam, and it is difficult to believe that these figures can be correct It appears that in Sibsagar Hindus who did not know to what sect they belonged were entered as Mahapurushias, if they did not worship idols, though it is obvious that this is hardly a suitable test to apply, and it is probable that similar mistakes were made in Nowgong If we assume, as does not seem unreasonable, that the proportion for Kamrup holds good for the Brahmaputra Valley, the numbers of the sect in Assam Proper sink from 480,584 to 357,399

Religion

Percentage of Hindus returned as Saktists

Darrang	19
Sibsagar	24
Lakhimpur	23

Percentage of Hindu garden population returned as Saktists

Darrang	26
Sibsagar	60
Lakhimpur	34

Percentage of Mahapurushias to total Hindu population

Nowgong	50
Sibsagar	34
Kamrup	19
Darrang	19
Lakhimpur	19
Goalpara	14

88 Rather more than one-quarter of the population of the province are followers of the Prophet, and of these 83 per cent were enumerated in the Surma Valley, Goalpara being the only other district in which they form any considerable portion of the population Sylhet was conquered at the end of the fourteenth century by a small band of Muhammadans under the leadership of the famous Fakir Shah Jalal, and so strongly did they establish their influence there, that at each of the last three censuses more than half of the population were returned as followers of this religion Cachar has been largely colonised from Sylhet, but the continuous immigration of garden coolies has tended to increase the proportion of Hindus, and Muhammadans, in consequence, form only 31 per cent. of the whole

Muhammadans

89 The first Muhammadan invasions of Assam are said to have taken place in the thirteenth century, when one General penetrated as far as Sadiya, and another left, as a memorial, the famous stone bridge near North Gauhati Three hundred years later Turbuk advanced to Kohabar (Silghat), and there was killed, leaving his army to become the degraded class of Muhammadans known to later generations as Morias, but it was not till the seventeenth century that Goalpara and part of Kamrup were annexed to the Mussalman empire, and Mir Jumla succeeded in making the Ahom king a tributary, at least in name, to the great Moghul During the seventeenth century Kamrup and Goalpara were occupied by the Muhammadans, the Nawabs held their court at Rangamati and Hajo, and the influence of the faith was strong, but on the break-up of the Moghul empire the Mussalmans in Assam were cut off from their co-religionists, and not unnaturally became lax in their observances and doctrine In the Census Report for 1881, the Muhammadan peasantry of Assam are described as being extremely ignorant of all that concerned their faith, some of them never even having heard of Muhammad, and others imagining that he corresponded to the Hindu Rama, but during the last twenty years considerable advances have been made, and ignorance as complete as this is no longer common Naturally, however, they are to some extent influenced by their surroundings, and planted, as they are, in the midst of a large Hindu population, they are free from the bigotry which in some countries is a prominent feature of this religion The effects of the various invasions of Assam are to be seen in the table in the margin, which shows the proportion of Muhammadans to the general population In Goalpara, they are fairly numerous, and even in Kamrup they form over 9 per cent of the inhabitants, but their numbers steadily decrease as we go eastwards, and in Lakhimpur they are only an insignificant fraction of the population, a result for which the large proportion of foreigners, who are generally Hindus, is partially responsible Islam has never had any attraction for the hill tribes, and though in the Garo Hills five per cent of the population are followers of the Prophet, they are not converted hillmen, but Mussalman peasantry who have moved from Goalpara into the plains portion of the district The Muhammadans censused in the North Cachar Hills are merely temporary visitors who have come up to work on the railway, and will have left the district long before the next census comes round

Islam in Assam Proper

Number of Muhammadans in 10 000 of the population

Goalpara	2 779
Kamrup	911
Darrang	515
Nowgong	432
Sibsagar	416
Lakhimpur	321

religion.

90 The statement in the margin shows the increase or decrease that has occurred in the plains districts of the province (a) amongst Muhammadans and (b) amongst the total population. Mr O Donnell points out in the Bengal Census Report for 1891 that the great increase which has occurred amongst Muhammadans in recent years in Eastern Bengal is due not only to proselytism but to the greater fertility of the followers of this religion. The Mussalman, with his more varied and nutritious dietary is probably a more vigorous man than the Hindu, the number of ill assorted marriages is not so large, and widows, instead of being condemned to a life of sterility not unfrequently obtain a second husband, if they have not passed the reproductive period. In Assam all variations in the population are complicated by the ever present factor of immigration, but in the Surma Valley it is fairly evident that if outside influences are excluded Muhammadans increase more rapidly than Hindus. In Cachar they have grown by 12 2 per cent., but it is impossible to determine how much of this is due to migration from Sylhet. In Sylhet they have increased by 5 per cent. (which is one per cent more than the increase for the total population) in spite of the fact that no less than 141 650 coolies the immense majority of whom were probably Hindus, have entered the district since the last census. In Goalpara, the increase (3 1) is small, but it is 1 1 per cent. more than the increase on the population as a whole, and in Kamrup and Nowgong, Muhammadans though they have been affected by the abnormal unhealthiness of the decade have decreased less rapidly than their neighbours. In Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the faith seems to have held its place, and to have shared in the general prosperity of the district, but in Darrang there is a marked decrease. This at first sight, seems strange, as the district, as a whole, has increased considerably in population since 1891; but when we analyze this increase we find that it is entirely due to immigration, and that the district born population of Darrang has decreased by 5·6 per cent. during the last ten years. A considerable number of the persons returned as born in Darrang are the children of Hindu immigrants born after their parents have settled in the district, and had all outside influences been removed there is little doubt that the decrease amongst the Muhammadans would have been less rapid than that amongst Hindus or the Animistic tribes. In the hill districts the Muhammadans are all temporary immigrants with the exception of the Garo Hills, where they are found in considerable numbers in the *terai* The increase in this district during the last ten years has been very appreciable the figures having risen from 5 597 to 7 804, but it is impossible to ascertain what proportion of this is due to the excess of births over deaths and what to migration from the adjacent districts though it is probable that the last named cause had most to do with the matter

Spread of Muhammadanism.

	Percentage of variation.	
	Muhammadans.	General population.
Cachar Plains	+12·2	+12·2
Sylhet	+ 5·0	+
Goalpara	+ 3·1	
Kamrup	− 2·6	− 1·8
Nowgong	− 5·6	+ 1·7
Darrang	−11·0	−·6
Sibsagar	+10·1	+·6
Lakhimpur	+17·1	+·6

Muhammadan sects.

91. The three sects selected for special compilation were the Sunnis, Shiahs and Ahli ha dis or Wahabis. Both Shiahs and Sunnis are in accord with regard to the essential parts of their religion, but differ in minor doctrinal points and in certain details of ritual. Sunnis regard the four companions of the Prophet,—Abu Bakr Omar Osman and Ali, who succeeded one another in the Khalifate,—as being of equal merit and piety but the Shiahs consider the first three to be mere usurpers and maintain that Ali was the first legitimate successor to the Prophet The Shiahs also consider a pilgrimage to the field of Karbela where Hussein, the son of Ali, was killed as necessary to their spiritual welfare as a visit to Mecca itself a view which is not held by the Sunnis, who regard the practice of commemorating this death at the Mohurrum with *tazias* and images as savouring of idolatry In matrimonial matters, also, the Sunnis hold stricter views than the Shiahs, and do not permit the temporary marriages sanctioned by the other sect. Turning to minor points of ritual, we find the Sunni praying with his hands crossed over his stomach, while the Shiah lets them fall at his side. The Shiah, too can say the midday and evening prayers together and the sunset and midnight prayers at the same time, but the Sunni has to repeat the five prayers at the five appointed hours. In the month of Ramzan however it is the Shiah who poses as the disciplinarian as he will not eat till it is dark, though the Sunni breaks his fast when the sun sets and the former declines to eat eels and other finless fishes, which according to the Sunni are permitted to the Faithful.

More than 98 per cent of the Muhammadans in the province returned themselves as Sunnis the total number of Shiahs being only 2 724. Forty-seven persons returned themselves as members of the Ahli-ha dis or Wahabi communion a sect of reforming Muhammadans with very strict and puritanical views on the subject of their religion who thirty years ago were suspected of active disloyalty to the British

Government In the Assam Valley 19,166 persons entered themselves as Mussalmans, and nothing more, a fact which is some indication of the backward condition of Islam in that division

Religion

Christianity

92 During the last ten years the Christian population of the province has more than doubled, the figures having risen from 16,844 to 35,969 2,099 of these persons are members of European and allied races, 275 are Eurasians, and 33,595 are natives of the country, the percentage of variation that has taken place amongst the three classes being + 24, — 28, and + 128 Sixty-six per cent of the Europeans are members of the Anglican communion, and only three other sects,—Presbyterians, Romanists, and Baptists,—have any appreciable number of followers

The Eurasians are a small body, the very great majority of whom are either members of the Church of England or of the Roman Catholic Church, there being 142 of the former, and 74 of the latter, out of a total population of 275

Native Christians

93. Amongst the native population, Christianity has made great strides during the past ten years, their numbers having risen from 14,762 to 33,595 This increase is due (*a*) to immigration, (*b*) to excess of births over deaths amongst the Christian community, and (*c*) to conversion, but it is to the last-named cause that the great bulk of the increase is due

Presbyterians *

94 The chief proselytizing agency in the province is the Welsh Mission, whose efforts in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills have been extraordinarily successful, the number of native Christians having risen from 6,941 to 17,125 There is no caste system or social prejudice amongst the Khasis to act as an obstacle to conversion, they come but little under the influence of Hinduism, and their readiness to accept the Christian faith can be judged from the fact that 8 6 per cent of the total population of the district have returned themselves under this head Amongst them, however, as amongst the other hill tribes, the stricter standard of morality is a stumbling-block One Khasi Christian of my acquaintance became a Unitarian, because, as he expressed it, the "Christians had so many sins,"—they objected, amongst other things, to his going to market on a Sunday,—and he ultimately had to leave the Unitarian Church, because they took exception to the very occasional bouts of drunkeness in which he indulged The rigid views with regard to the relations of the sexes are also a trial to a people who indulge in what almost amounts to a system of free love, and if the missionaries were able to relax their moral code, the numbers of their converts would in all probability be largely increased

Other Missions

95 The Baptist Mission has also met with a large measure of success, the numbers of this sect having risen from 3,767 to 10,045 Their main centres are in the Garo Hills, Goalpara, Kamrup and Sibsagar, and in the first two districts their numbers have nearly trebled, while in the last two, taken together, they have more than doubled In the Naga Hills, also, the number of Baptists has increased by one-and-a-half-fold, but the total number (563) is small, and the Nagas do not apparently adopt Christianity as readily as the hill tribes to the west In comparison with these non-conformist bodies, the efforts of the established church seem to have been singularly unblessed, the native Anglicans of Darrang having only increased by sixty souls during the past decade, but it must not be forgotten that the attractions of Hinduism are much greater in the plains than in the hills, where Christianity has practically no rival in the field Since 1891 the Roman Catholics have started a mission amongst the Khasis, and have succeeded in making 551 converts In Sylhet, also, there is a colony of Romanists who date back to very early times, but to judge from the smallness of their numbers (126) no serious attempt can have been made to obtain new converts Under the head of minor denominations there are 3,196 natives distributed over all the districts of the province These persons consist, for the most part, of those who have returned themselves as Native Christians, and nothing more.

Buddhists

	1901	1891	+ or —
Cachar Plains	14	2	+ 12
Sylhet ..	7	8	— 1
Goalpara ..	346	112	+ 234
Kamrup	811	813	— 2
Darrang	494	519	— 25
Nowgong	49	40	+ 9
Sibsagar	1 668	937	+ 691
Lakhimpur	4 572	4,462	+ 110
Lushai Hills	132	..	+ 132
North Cachar	9		+ 9
Naga Hills	337	360	— 23
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	55	2	+ 53
Garo Hills	272	392	— 120
Manipur ..	145		+ 145
Province ..	8 911	7 697	+1,214

96 The statement in the margin shows the distribution of Buddhists by districts at the last two censuses The total increase that has occurred is 1,214, but for this, the Lushai Hills and Manipur, which were not censused in 1891, and Sibsagar are largely responsible, and the increase in the last-named district is hardly genuine, as in 1891, the 706 Noras enumerated there seem to have been classified as Hindus, though they are in reality Buddhists Buddhism has taken no hold upon the people of Assam, and the numbers in the various districts remain very constant The great bulk of those returned in Kamrup, Darrang and Goalpara are

* In 1891 they were shown as Methodists, and on the present occasion as Presbyterians 'Protestants unspecified' have been included under this head in both years.

ion Bhutias, who have come down for the cold weather to trade in the plains; but in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, there are small colonies of Noras Turungs Shans, Aitonas, and Phakials who profess the Buddhist faith. These persons originally came from Burma and settled in the province about eighty years ago but they have not as yet been absorbed into the surrounding population, and only marry in their own community a fact which no doubt does not conduce to a high rate of increase

The proportion of Buddhists to the total population of the province is the same as in 1891 *i e* 14 out of every 10 000 persons. The ratio is sufficiently low but is higher than that prevailing in most of the other provinces

Jains.

97 There are 1 797 Jains in the province, of whom no less than 1 600 are found in the *Brahmaputra Valley The great majority of these persons* are shrewd Marwari merchants who have succeeded in monopolising the trade of the valley but who do not as a rule, make it their home or bring their wives or children with them; a fact which accounts for the great disproportion between the sexes there being only 295 women to 1,502 men.

Sikhs.

98 The Sikhs are another small community numbering only 505 souls. In 1891 they were only found in Goalpara and Nowgong, but at the present census Sylhet, the Garo Hills, and Manipur are the only districts in which the religion has not a single representative. The colony in Nowgong has risen in numbers from 63 to 214, and strangely enough, the women out number the men, but the greater portion of the increase is no doubt due to the employment of Sikhs as military policemen on the Assam Bengal Railway

Brahmos.

99 One small sect remains to be noticed, the members of the Brahmo Samaj, who make up in intellectual culture for what they lack in numbers. The followers of this religion have increased from 239 to *260 during the past ten years, but most of them are emigrants from Bengal serving* in ministerial appointments, and the religion has made practically no progress amongst the common people. In 1891 these persons were included amongst the Hindus, but the orthodox Hindu in Assam declines to admit that they are members of his society and they have therefore been shown separately on the present occasion.

Animism.

100 Lastly we come to a religion, or group of religions, which, judged from the numerical standpoint, is of considerable importance in this province. Animism, the name given to the aboriginal beliefs of the hill tribes, has been defined by Dr Tiele in the following terms

Animism is th belief in the existe ce of souls or pirits, of which only the powerful those on which man feel himself dependent, d before which he tand i we acquire the rank of divine beings and become the objects of worship. These spirits are conceived as movi g freely through earth and air and either f their own ccord, or because conjured *by some spell* and thus nder compulsion, *appearing to men. But they may also take p the bod either permanently* or temporarily in some object, whether lifeless or livi g it matters not, and this object, as endowed with higher power is then worshipped or mployed to protect individuals or communities.

For the purposes of the census, Animism can, *however be more readily defined* by the negative method as the creed of those members of the aboriginal tribes who did not claim to be followers of the main recognised religions.

Brief description of Animistic beliefs.

101. Animism is not unfrequently described as devil worship * and there is a tendency to look upon the religious ideas of the hillmen as something peculiarly savage and absurd, worthy only of contempt and abhorrence; but as a matter of fact these primitive systems of religion, which though they vary in detail in each tribe, have much in common with one another are far from discreditable to the intelligence of their founders. Amongst most tribes there are legends of the creation of the world which do not compare unfavourably with the accounts given in many of the recognised religions.

As an example I may quote the Mikir account of the Creation as detailed by the Reverend P H Moore

A long tim ago, two gods, Hemphu and Mookrang, held a consultation to decide about creating the universe They determi ed the limits and set four great posts to show the boundaries of the wo ld which remain to this day as they were fastened immoveably with six bairs which the two gods *got from their mother Having set the limits they* proceeded t plan the creation but they had no seed that could produce an earth so they called t one hundred other gods and their wives to advise them and after long consultation decided to send one of the wives to get a little earth from the god Hajong H jong, however refused to give any seed to help a rival earth t be formed d sent the goddess away mpty but as she returned h noticed the little bits of earth at the holes of the earthworms, and stole small piece and hid it in her bosom. Even with this half-pound of ro d the gods were ot able to make an earth, so they sent for the king of the earthworms, who worked so well at the bit of mud that in on day it became about ten feet i diameter

* This expression seems to be singularly unfortunate, suggesting, as it does, th adoration of devils, Christians dore God. The hillmen, how ever fears th evil spirits and endeavours to propitiate them hich h ery different

Religion

and eventually grew into our globe Even then, however, another difficulty confronted them It was only worm mud, so soft that no one could travel on it, so Kaprang was called, and he with a blacksmith's bellows caused a wind to blow that eventually dried the mud to solid earth The gods then brought seeds from the far west, and from them grew reeds and trees and all kinds of vegetables, and then came the creation of animals The elephant, being the greatest, was told to be the servant of man, and to the tiger was entrusted the duty of eating the wicked Last of all came man, who was provided with two wives, one a Mikir, the other an Assamese The descendants of this Adam increased and multiplied exceedingly, and, tired of the mastery of the earth only, they determined to conquer the stars With this object they began to build a tower to reach unto heaven, but the gods, in fear lest they might attain their purpose, confounded their speech and scattered them to the four corners of the earth, and it was from this time that men began to speak different languages

The Garos also have legends of the gradual creation of the world by a goddess named Nastoo, who sprang from a self-begotten egg Streams of water issued from her womb and became rivers, all kinds of reeds and grasses sprang up, and then came fish and other reptiles, birds, and animals, and lastly man From the scientific point of view, these accounts no doubt leave much to be desired, but the same can be said of most other stories of the Creation

Amongst nearly all the tribes there is a belief in beneficent gods, who, as they entertain friendly feelings towards men, do not require much in the way of sacrifice, but the thing which impresses itself most forcibly and painfully upon the mind of the uneducated hillmen is the existence of apparently unmerited pain and trouble He is confronted with the problem, to which no satisfactory solution has yet been found, of innocent persons suffering misfortune, sickness and death, and he attempts to solve the difficulty by assuming the existence of malignant spirits, who take delight in tormenting man, and who have therefore to be propitiated by any means that are likely to prove acceptable Such a view can hardly be called unreasonable by any one who has had any experience of the useless misery so commonly met with in this life, and equally temperate and reasonable are the views of the ordinary hillman with regard to a future state of existence Their attitude is well brought out by the reply given me by some Miris on the north-east frontier, who told me that they believed in a future life, but added, with intention, that they had never heard of a dead man who had returned to this earth The feeling '*non omnis moriar*' seems to be strongly implanted in the minds of these uncivilized men, but they are at the same time fully conscious of the impossibility of obtaining any definite information with regard to the life after death, and so, sensibly enough, decline to trouble themselves much about the matter Some tribes, more especially the Nagas, have adopted the theory of the transmigration of souls from their Hindu neighbours, but the general idea is that after death they live again much the same life that they have spent upon this earth, either in some place beyond the stars or in some village far removed from their ordinary settlements

The Garos believe that the souls of the dead go to live on Chikmang, a peak of the Tura range, the Mikirs say that after death those who have been cremated with due rites will go to a village called Chum Arong Amongst this tribe there is a distinct idea of different degrees of bliss in a future life People who have not been properly cremated can only get into the fields of Chum Arong, and not into the village itself, and separate villages are provided for those who have been killed by drowning, by bears, wild elephants and tigers, the last named being the most undesirable of all, nearly all hill tribes looking upon sudden and violent deaths as an indication of some special unworthiness in the unfortunate victim There is also a special heaven amongst the Mikirs, called 'Boojkoon,' into which the 'unco guid' alone can enter, and they too only, if they possess the rather peculiar qualifications of having danced the one-legged dance and eaten the fat of the great lizard, and duck, pheasant, and cocoanut The Tangkhul Nagas place their heaven in a state to the west, and the Kukis to the north, and the popular theory amongst all tribes is that the dead journey to some place behind the most distant ranges visible from their villages There is also a widespread belief that the spirits of animals and men slain by the deceased in this life will attend on him in the next world The Garos before our occupation of their country used to kill slaves when their chiefs died, and still sacrifice dogs, who it is supposed will show the spirit the way to Chikmang The Khasis sacrifice a cock, which acts not only as a guide, but wakes the dead man every morning, so that he can pursue his journey * The Kukis think that all the enemies a man has slain will be his slaves in the next world, and that his farm will be stocked by the animals that he has eaten, and much the same view is held by the Tangkhul and Kacchha Nagas The last named tribe have the somewhat curious belief that the spirits of the dead remain for

* A parallel to this quaint practice is to be found amongst the Hindus, who are supposed to dedicate a cow at death to help them to cross the river Baitarani, which flows before the palace of the Hindu Pluto.

ligion. a year in their own homes, and rice is in consequence offered to them at the time when the family are taking their meals but the dead man is not as a rule welcomed so hospitably and, though a small shed is often built for his use near the grave, steps are taken to guard against his revisiting his home, and terrifying the inmates. One exception to the general belief in the future state is to be found however in the Hojais and Kacharis who practically ignore all possibility of a life after death.

Hostile spirits.

102. For each of the class of evils to which men are commonly subject a special demon is usually made responsible. The following account is given by Mr Needham of the malignant spirits who trouble the Padam Abors :

The Padam religion consists in propitiating certai malignant sp rits by off rings of sulthan pig, fowls, liquors etc. The chief are the Apem or Epom and his younger brother Pomsa. Their habitat is the rubber tree and they are chiefly propitiated when sickness occurs. Uron is another malignant spirit who is said to reside in unclean places. He has the power of attacking people after dark, and causing stomachaches d headaches. He is generally offered som dried bones d liquor Then th re are the Kil Dele (male and female) who are supposed to reside nder ground and turn th l attention to destroying crops and other field produce. Sacrifices to these spirits are usually made under a granary and they require two cooked fowls pounded rice, *tamul*, *p n* etc. Nipong is a demon who is essentially bent on harming females, so almost all ailments from which women suffer specially at the time of parturition or menstruation ar attributed to him but, although he pays particular attentio to females, he does not spare men either for all cases of haemorrhage or severe stomachaches, which cause the sufferer to roll about lik a woman in travail, are attributed to him He is said to live in plantain groves or amongst stinging-nettles, and to exist on the seeds of that plant.

System of divination.

103 But though special demons are appointed to preside over special classes of misfortune, it is generally thought advisable to call in a person learned in these matters to decide who is responsible for the trouble, and what particular form of sacrifice is required. There are various methods in force for obtaining the desired information. That of egg healing amongst the Khamis is thus described by Mr J B Shadwell

An expert is set down before a board, in the centre of which he places an egg on a few grains of rice ; after l voking the egg to speak the truth he sweeps the rice ff the board, except ing one grain left on any spot his fancy dictates. Then ming a particular spirit, he asks that, if be be the cause of the d, part of the hell f the egg may be deposited ear the grain of rice be th strikes th egg sharply on the board. This process is repeated, if necessary till the desired information is obtained. The ext thing is to discover what sort f offering will be ceptable to the pirits. This is ascertained in a precis ly similar way but the desired result is ofte not arrived at till m h time and many scores of eggs have been spended.

Amongst the Miris a different system is in force, which is thus described by Mr F J Needham C LE.

The *modus operandi* is as follows Two spear headed leaves, which hould point to the eastward or orthward when about to be pl cked (those dropping to the westward and southward are fleged t be untrustworthy) are plucked and drawn through the right hand t with r them after which each on is slit into ix strings with the right th mbnail and left attached to their stalks. Each leaf is then take up in turn t the left ha d h ld aloft and adjured to prognosticate truly after which th divine gath rs the six strings in his right hand, draw them through it a few times to f rther wither and mak them more pliable, and then, gathering them together proceed to twist them several times round ed round and ties four of th string ends into two pairs. When both leaves have been treat d in this fashion, he opens them out, *i e* twists th strings and exami es the lay of the two loops and th pare stri gs. I will here prem se that in cases of sickness the right-h nd loop represents the house of the patient and the righthand tring the patient himself while the left-hand loop represents the bod of the spirits supposed to be ca sing th ickn ss and the left-hand string the spirit itself. Should the two loose strings fall to the patient loop or house it is a very bad omen as the spirit afflicti g him is actually closeted with him and if the string representing the spirit is outside and on the right-hand of th patient, it is likewise a bad one

An inspection of the liver and entrails of the victim is amongst many tribes supposed to enable an expert to foretell the future, or a fowl is throttled, and the way in which it crosses its legs is noted. There are other signs of approaching misfortune vouchsafed spontaneously by the spirits. The Padam Abors and Miris consider it to be most unlucky to see a dog dragging its hind-quarters along the ground, or to have a bird fall dead near to them and the Nagas think that the songs of some birds are lucky when heard on the right of the path unlucky if they come from the left. But, with all this fear of and propitiation of evil spirits there is also a widespread tendency to offer sacrifices to secure prosperity and success Amongst the Mikirs there is a distinct sense of the power of the gods to protect and a man engaged in a lawsuit will sacrifice a goat on the path which his opponent will take to the cutcherry and pray for his discomfiture. Every Mikir too should sacrifice once a year to God to obtain good harvests and ensure good health and this practice obtains amongst the

majority of the Animistic tribes Amongst the Hojais and Lalungs this annual sacrifice was invested with great ceremony, and the most acceptable of all offerings, human life, is said to have been made prior to our occupation of the country. Religion

104 The connection between morality and religion is, however, loose and ill-defined, and amongst the Mikirs at any rate success in theft is said to be due to skill in sacrifice The following catalogue of sins has been supplied me by a Khasi,—murder, serious assault, adultery, rape and theft, and these five offences are, I think, a fairly exhaustive list for the hill tribes of Assam, whilst amongst many of the Naga tribes the first two would be omitted from the category, at any rate as regards all persons outside one's own particular *khel* The simplicity of their moral code has much to recommend it, and seems far from unattractive when compared with religious systems, which to the impartial observer appear to deliberately invent sins, and civilisations which attempt to base themselves on a denial of the laws of nature

Connection between religion and morality

105 One superstition remains, which fortunately is not widely spread, but is of so strange a character as to deserve special mention The Khasis, who are in several ways a most exceptional race, are peculiar also in this, that they think that certain families are cursed or blessed with a familiar spirit that bears the name of Thlen This spirit may assume the form of a snake, stick, or bundle, but at certain seasons of the year it rouses itself, and can only be appeased with blood A man and a woman must be murdered, and parts of their clothing mixed with rice and blood drawn from the hands, feet, and nostrils offered to the Thlen, who appears in the shape of a cat and plays with the offering, which then takes the form of miniature representations of the murdered man and woman If the Thlen is not fed in this manner, it will kill or trouble the members of the family amongst whom it lives , and there is, I believe, little doubt that in the wilder parts of the district, people are murdered on account of this strange superstition, children being taken for the purpose and reported as drowned, if adults are not obtainable The Khasis themselves have a keen appreciation of the risk of their falling victims to the Thlen, and during the months when it is supposed to crave for human blood are very reluctant to go about alone after dark

The Thlen

106 One million sixty-eight thousand three hundred and thirty-four persons, or rather more than 17 per cent of the population of the province, have been returned as followers of the Animistic religions In the Surma Valley, the proportion is but small, there being only 19 out of every 1,000 of the population in Cachar, and 5 in Sylhet, but in Assam Proper the ratio is as high as 178 per mille In the hills they form, of course, the great mass of the population (846 per mille), and even in Manipur they are over one-third of the total In the Lushai and Naga Hills over 95 per cent of the inhabitants are Animists, but in the Khasi Hills, where Christianity is a factor to be reckoned with, and in the Garo Hills, where there are an appreciable number of Hindus and Muhammadans in the plains portion of the district, the ratio sinks to 88 and 82 per cent , respectively In Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, the proportion of Animistic persons is but small, being only 7 and 5 per cent , but in the other four districts of the Assam Valley they form an important section of the population, ranging from 31 per cent in Nowgong to 21 per cent in Kamrup

Distribution by districts

107 Statement VI, appended to this chapter, shows the variation that has occurred in the different districts of the province during the past ten years The gross increase amounts to 10 1 per cent , but this is due to the inclusion of the figures for Manipur and the Lushai Hills If they are omitted from the calculation, there is a decrease of 4 48 per cent This decrease is not to be wondered at, as, while Animism loses considerable numbers to Christianity and Hinduism, it makes no converts , and the indigenous population of three of the plains districts, in which it is most prevalent, *i e* , Nowgong, Kamrup, and Darrang, has decreased very seriously during the last intercensal period The decrease of nearly 30 per cent in the Surma Valley is due no doubt to the pressure of public opinion, the unconverted tribes being numerically an insignificant community in the midst of a large Hindu and Muhammadan population The increase in Goalpara must be due either to a higher standard of Hinduism having been exacted on the present occasion, or to a more rapid rate of increase amongst the Animistic tribes , and the same explanation must be offered for Kamrup, where the decrease amongst the Animistic tribes is considerably less than that amongst the total population In Nowgong and Darrang, the decrease is due to the ravages of *kalá-ázár*, which attacked the tribes in the south of Nowgong with peculiar severity, and to conversions to Hinduism The increase in Sibsagar is explained by the transfer of territory from the Naga Hills.

Increase or decrease

Religion

Distribution by religion in Assam and other provinces.

108 Subsidiary Table VII shows the distribution of the main religions in Assam and five of the principal provinces of India. The proportion of Hindus is comparatively low the Punjab where there are a very large number of Muhammadans being the only province in which they form as small a section of the total population The percentage of Moslems is fairly high for though it is surpassed by the figures for the Punjab and Bengal, it is considerably in advance of that of the remaining three provinces. The Animistic tribes are very strongly represented as they form 17·4 per cent. of the whole, and though in the Central Provinces they are also numerous elsewhere these simple forms of belief have but few followers Thanks to the labours of the missionaries amongst the hill tribes the number of Christians is also fairly large, and they form 6 per mille of the total population as compared with 3 in Bengal and 2 in the Central and North-Western Provinces and the Punjab; but Madras still easily maintains its position as the most Christian province. There is one Buddhist to every thousand people, as compared with three in Bengal elsewhere Buddhism is practically unknown.

Religion

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Distribution of population by religion

Religion	1901		1891		1881		Percentage of variation increase (+), decrease (−)		Net variation
	Number	Proportion per 10,000.	Number	Proportion per 10 000	Number	Proportion per 10 000	1891 to 1901	1881 to 1891	1881 to 1901
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Hindus	3,429,099	5,597	2,997,072	5,472			+ 14 4 + 8 7		
Sikhs	505	1	83		14		+ 508 5	+493	+ 491 + 466
Jains	1,797	3	1,368	3	158		+ 31 3 + 30 7	+765	+ 1,639
Buddhists	8,911	14	7,697	140	6,565	13	+ 15·7	+ 17 2	+ 2,346 + 2,214
Muhammadans	1,581,317	2,581	1,483,974	2,710	1,321,903	2,591	+ 6 5 + 5 8	+ 12 2 + 12 6	+ 259,414 + 259,212
Christians	35,969	59	16,844	31	7,100	14	+ 113 5 + 113 2	+137	+ 28,869 + 28,824
Brahmos	360	1			177				+ 183
Animistic	1,068,334	1,744	969,765	1,770			+ 10 1 − 0 48		
Others	51		30				+ 70 0		+ 51
Total	6,126,343	10,000	5,476,833	10 000	5,102,496		+ 11 86 + 6 66	+ 7 33 + 11 30	+ 1,023,847 + 941,413

Hindus and Animistic—Column 6—The figures for 1881 are not given as the distinction between Hinduism and Animism was not properly observed in that year

Column 8—The lower set of the figures in brackets shows the variation excluding Manipur

Column 9—In the lower set of figures totals for Manipur and the Lushai Hills have been excluded

Column 10.—Totals for Lushai Hills have been excluded from the lower set of figures

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Distribution of religions by natural divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts.	HINDUS			MUHAMMADANS			ANIMISTS			Variation per 10,000 (+) or (−)		
	Proportion per 10 000 in			Proportion per 10 000 in			Proportion per 10,000 in			from 1891 to 1901 in		
	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	Hindus.	Muhammadans	Animistic.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Cachar Plains	6,725	6,528	6,449	3,055	3,070	3,145	194	378	330	+ 197	− 15	− 184
Sylhet	4,680	4,715	4,821	5,265	5,217	5,157	50	64	18	− 35	+ 48	− 14
Total Surma Valley	5,000	4,864	5,029	4,920	4 884	4,905	73	110	58	+ 136	+ 36	− 37
Goalpara	4,409	4,631	7,374	2,779	2,751	2,348	2,719	2,567	262	− 222	+ 28	+ 152
Kamrup	6,914	7,019	8,836	911	873	782	2,132	2,077	364	− 105	+ 38	+ 55
Darrang	7,095	6,367	9,213	515	599	567	2,326	2,985	177	+ 728	− 84	− 659
Nowgong	6,422	6,226	8,040	482	411	388	3,054	3,343	1,560	+ 196	+ 71	− 289
Sibsagar	8,855	9,157	9,173	416	433	423	656	355	373	− 302	− 17	+ 301
Lakhimpur	8,979	8,944	8,460	321	318	323	484	493	910	+ 35	+ 3	− 9
Total Brahmaputra Valley	7,182	6,983	8,504	950	979	918	1,782	1,973	533	+ 199	− 29	− 191
Total Plains	6,083	5,967	6,754	2,949	2,971	2,926	921	1,028	294	+ 116	− 22	− 107
Lushai Hills	409	368		25	49		9,542	9 578		+ 41	− 24	− 36
North Cachar	5,858	4,340	4,478	1,422	8	1	2 656	5,651	5,519	+1,518	+1,414	−2,995
Naga Hills	327	361	133	14	17	9	9,565	9,571	9,853	− 34	− 3	− 6
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	265	230	336	55	41	33	8,815	9,366	9,504	+ 35	+ 14	− 551
Garo Hills	960	937	1,448	564	460	377	8,192	8,472	8,099	+ 23	+ 104	− 280
Total Hill Districts	870	598	848	266	135	120	8,460	9,080	8,955	+ 272	+ 131	− 580
Manipur	5,996		5,920	365		220	3,631		3,857			
Total Province	5,597	5,472	6,273*	2,581	2,709	2,698	1,743	1,770	1,000*	+ 125	− 128	− 27

Columns 4 and 10.—Little or no reliance can be placed upon these figures as the distinction between the Animistic tribes and Hindus was not properly observed in 1881

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III.

Distribution of Christians by districts

Natural Divisions and Districts.	Number of Christians in			Variation, increase (+) or decrease (−).		
	1901.	1891.	1881.	1891–1901.	1881–1891.	1881–1901.
				8		9
Cachar Plains	937	809	765	+ 148	+ 44	+ 192
Sylhet	764	643	379	+	+ 264	+ 385
Total Surma Valley ...	1,701	1,452	144	+ 249	+ 308	+ 557
Goalpara	3,425	1,632	513	+ 1,863	+ 1,119	+ 2,982
Kamrup	479	418	368	+ 53	+ 582	+ 1,113
Darrang ...	1,358	849	87	+ 509	+ 472	+ 987
Nowgong ...	593	417	254	+ 176	+ 163	+ 339
Sibsagar	2,489	1,364	803	+ 1,124	+ 561	+ 1,685
Lakhimpur ...	3	1,008	237	+ 506	+ 769	+ 1,275
Total Brahmaputra Valley	12,526	6,187	3,245	+ 5,709	+ 3,267	+ 8,938
Total Plains ...	14,227	8,269	4,389	+ 5,958	+ 3,960	+ 9,918
Lushai Hills ...	45	15	...	+ 30	...	...
North Cachar ...	83			+ 83	—	+ 8
Naga Hills	60	23	25	+ 370	+ 206	+ 576
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	7,522	7,441	2,07	+ 10,77	+ 5,037	+ 5,2 4
Garo Hills	2,047	1,81	670	+ 2,463	+ 314	+ 2,777
Total Hill Districts	1,97	8,575	804	+ 3,12	+ 5,756	+ 18,848
Manipur	45	...	7	...	...	+ 38
Total Province ...	35,969	6,844	7,100	+ 9,080	+ 9,736	+ 28,824

and Province, census —As the census was not taken in Manipur in 1891, no variation there can be shown, and the number of the Christians returned at the last census has been excluded from the total variation for the Province.

Total Province, census 6—Excludes the figures of Lushai Hills and Manipur.

Data Astro —Excludes the figures of I shal Hills.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Distribution of Christians by race and denomination.

Denomination.	EUROPEAN AND ALLIED RACES.		EURASIAN.		NATIVE.		TOTAL.		Variation ( ) or (−).
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	901.	1891.	10
Anglican Communion ...	1,022	370	96	46	94	899	3,374	4,346	− 97
Armenian ...	...	...	...	...	—	...	—	—	+
Baptist	36	3	8	1	5 94	4,773	10,045	3,767	+ 6,278
Calvinist ...	...	...	—	—	7		7	—	+ 7
Congregationalist ...	3	3	...	...	—	—	8	3	+ 7
Greek ...	...	...	...	...	—	...	—	...	+
Indefinite beliefs ...	7	...		...	06	1 6	229	24	+ 205
Lutheran and allied denominations	5	...		...	744	679	428	290	+ 138
Methodist			3		4	9	6,83		− 6,8
Minor denominations ...	12	9	16		1,687	1,309	3,333		+ 3,331
Presbyterian	239	66	7	13	7,631	8,416	16,405	332	+ 16,073
Quaker			...	...	—	—	3		+
Roman Catholic ...	95	60	40	34	425	406	1,073	734	+ 339
Salvationist ...		—		...	—		—		—
T tal	1,546	553	70	105	6,751	6,844	35,969	16,844	+ 19 5

Religion.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Proportion of Saktists, Sivaites, and Mahapurushias

Natural divisions and districts	Proportion per 10,000 Hindus in each district			Natural divisions and districts	Proportion per 10,000 Hindus in each district		
	Saktist	Sivaites	Mahapurushias		Saktist	Sivaites	Mahapurushias
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Cachar Plains	3,062	642		Nowgong	783	38	4,955
Sylhet	2,988	548		Sibsagar	2,448	152	3,418
				Lakhimpur	2,286	272	1,879
Total Surma Valley	3,003	568					
Goalpara	526	328	1,442	Total Brahmaputra Valley	1,499	142	2,554
Kamrup	180	14	1,911				
Darrang ..	1,880	69	1,945	Total Plains	2,122	318	1,513

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VI

Percentage of increase or decrease of Hindus, Muhammadans, and Animists by divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts.	HINDUS.		MUHAMMADANS		ANIMISTIC.	
	Total.	Percentage of variation (+) or (—)	Total.	Percentage of variation (+) or (—)	Total	Percentage of variation (+) or (—)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cachar Plains	278,964	+ 16 2	126,698	+ 12 2	8,079	— 41 8
Sylhet	1,049,248	+ 3 2	1,180,324	+ 5 0	11,337	— 17 9
Total Surma Valley	1,328,212	+ 5·7	1,307,022	+ 5·6	19,416	— 29 9
Goalpara	203,696	— 2 7	128,388	+ 3 1	125,618	+ 8 1
Kamrup	407,363	— 8 4	53,701	— 2 9	125,599	— 4 6
Darrang	239,318	+ 22 1	17,372	— 5 8	78,458	— 14 5
Nowgong	167,709	— 21 7	12,578	— 11 0	79,767	— 30·6
Sibsagar	529,480	+ 26·4	24,878	+ 25·6	39,203	+ 141 3
Lakhimpur .	333,484	+ 46 7	11,925	+ 47 4	17,973	+ 43·2
Total Brahmaputra Valley	1,881,050	+ 9 9	248,842	+ 3 5	466,618	— 3 5
Total Plains	3,209,262	+ 8 1	1,555,864	+ 5·3	486,034	— 4 9
Lushai Hills	3,373		202		78,657	
North Cachar	23,908	+ 190 8	5,804	+38,593	10,839	+ 1·2
Naga Hills	3,351	— 24 4	142	— 32 0	97,948	— 16·7
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	5,354	+ 17 2	1,118	+ 36 3	178,275	— 3 8
Garo Hills	13,274	+ 16 5	7,804	+ 39 4	113,274	+ 9 9
Total Hill Districts .	49,260	+ 62 9	15,070	+ 119 7	478,993	+ 4 4
	45,887	+ 60 3	14,868	+ 123 8	400,336	— 3 9
Manipur	170,577		10,383		103,307	
Total Province	3,429,099	+ 14 4	1,581,317	+ 6 5	1,068,334	+ 10 1

Total Hill districts.—The lower set of figures indicates the totals and percentage of variation excluding the Lushai Hills.

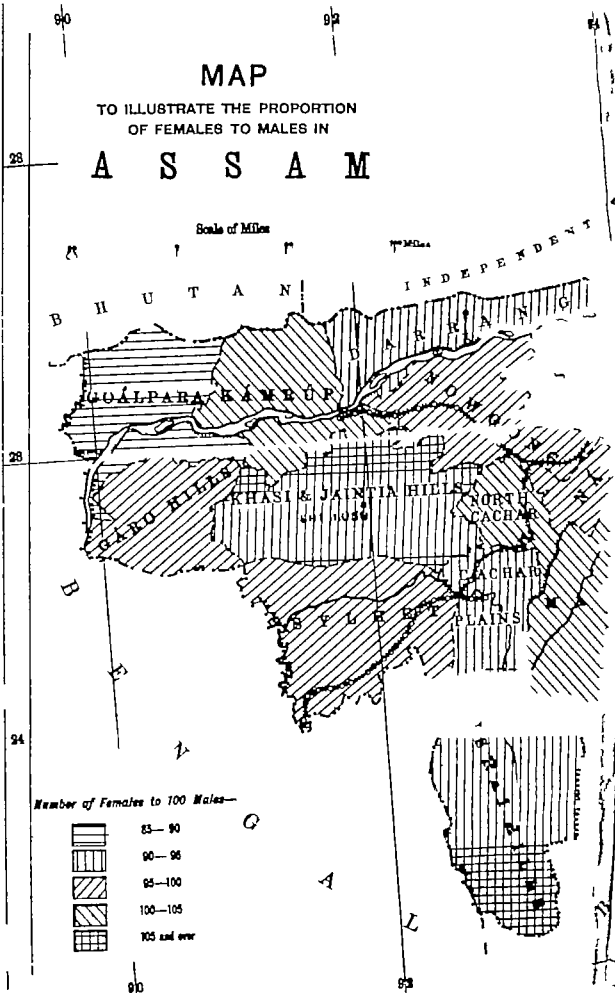
Religion.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VII.

Distribution of main religions in Assam and other provinces

Provinces.	Number in ,000 of the population.				
	Hindus.	Mahomedans.	Christians.	Animists.	Buddhists
		3	4	5	6
Assam ...	960	98	6	174	
Bengal ...	632	324	3	250	
North-Western Provinces and Oudh ...	850	141		—	—
Central Provinces ...	82	26		143	—
Madras ...	850	64	40*	10*	—
Punjab ...	400*	214*	9*	—	—

The figures marked with an asterisk are for 1891



Reg. No 831, Orissa Const., 1.11.—[illegible]

Exterior Eastern Boundary in accordance with Trace recd. with The Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam's Letter No. 1550 Misc. dated 24th January 1901

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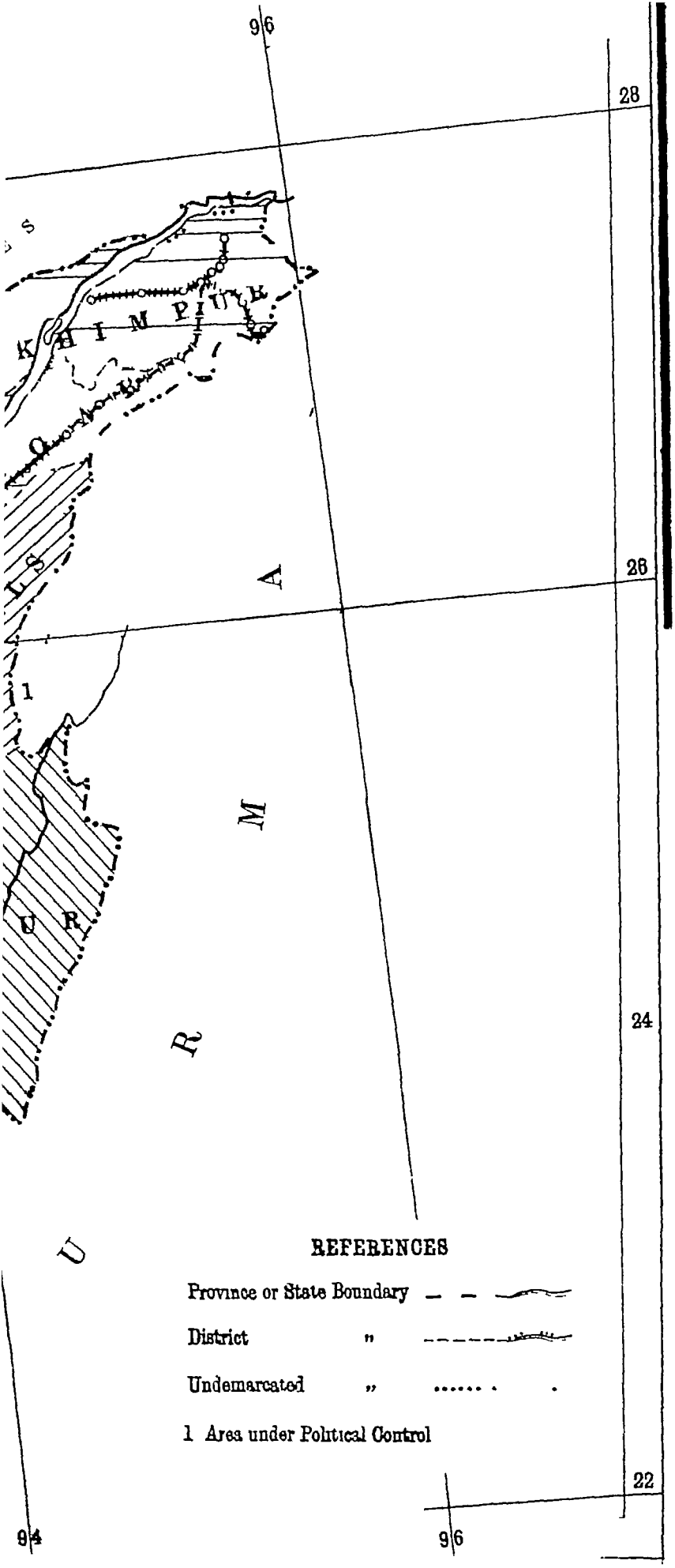


REFERENCE

Exact proportion of females to males—

Lakhimpur	86
Sibságar	89
Goálpára	90
Cachar Plains	91
Darrang	92
Nowgong	96
Sylhet	96
Gáro Hills	97
Nágá Hills	98
North Cachar*	100
Kámrúp	101
Manipur	104
Khási & Jaintia Hills	108
Lushai Hills	111

*Exclusive of the Railway population

Photo S I O, Calcutta

CHAPTER V.

SEX

Accuracy of the returns

109 In the majority of European countries, where we assume, and no doubt rightly, that statistics are collected and compiled with greater accuracy than in other parts of the world, the census returns disclose a considerable excess of women In France, in 1891 there were 1,014 females to every 1,000 males In the United Kingdom, including the army, navy, and merchant service abroad, the proportion was 1,048, and in Germany 1,037 , so that when we find that in Assam there were only 949 women to every 1,000 men, we are at first inclined to doubt whether our figures can be correct

Sex

The position of women in India, is, however, so different from that accorded to them in Europe, that it would obviously be most unsafe to assume that what is true of the one place will of necessity be true of the other, and the most reliable test of the accuracy of our figures will be found in a comparison with those returned in the other provinces of the Empire The first thing to do is to eliminate the foreign element of the province Nearly 13 per cent of the persons censused in Assam were emigrants from other parts of India, amongst whom the proportion of women is notoriously low,* and, if we confine our attention to persons born in the province, we find that there are 977 women to every 1,000 men This rate is undoubtedly low when compared with the Central Provinces (1,031), or Madras (1,027), but is considerably in advance of the North-Western Provinces (937), and the Punjab (856), and though it is below the rate for the whole of Bengal (998), it is higher than the proportion recorded in the two divisions that adjoin Assam, *i e*, Dacca (972), and Rajshahi (934) Successive censuses have, moreover, confirmed the view that there is actually a scarcity of women in Assam In 1881, the rate (excluding foreigners) was 966, and at the next census 968, so there has been a substantial advance on the present occasion , and, whatever may be thougnt of the census of twenty years ago, there can be no question of the care with which the enumeration was made in 1891

The explanations offered of the omission of women from the schedule are, either that the householder looks upon his women-folk with such contempt that he is unable to believe that it is a matter of any importance whether their names are recorded or not, or that he is of so jealous a temperament that he does not like to allow even the Government to become aware of their existence, but neither of these explanations seems to be suitable to this province In Assam Proper the number of women who remain behind the *purdah* is too small to affect the figures, and as the great bulk of the female population take their share in the cultivation of the land, they are too important to be ignored, while the fact that the great majority of the Assamese have to pay for their wives in cash or kind, or to serve for them, as Jacob did for Rachel, suggests that the deficiency of women is a genuine one, and, though the conditions of life in Sylhet and Cachar are somewhat different, I have been informed by gentlemen who are natives of those districts that there is no reason to suppose that females were omitted either intentionally or through an oversight

Causes affecting the proportion of the sexes.

110 There has been a steady increase in the proportion of women to men amongst the natives of the province at the last three censuses and, though this is generally supposed to be an indication of the superior accuracy of the enumeration, I do not think that this is the correct explanation of the increase that has occurred during the last decade An increase in the number of women in the indigenous population must be due either to an increase in the proportion of female births, or to a decrease in female mortality, or to both of these causes combined Assam has been unhealthy between 1891 and 1901, and, according to the Madras Census Report of 1881,† this would justify us in expecting a large proportion of female infants Unfortunately, our confidence in this hypothesis is rudely shaken by Mr Baines,‡ who quotes a theory, which is entirely opposed to that of Sir Lewis McIver, to the effect that underfed and weakly women are more likely to bear boys than girls The Vital Returns give us very little help in attempting to decide which of these absolutely contradictory opinions is correct. During the last ten years, the proportion of girls born to one thousand boys in

* It was 777 to 1,000 men

† Page 81—" It seems likely that there is a physiological explanation of this, and that women who have been affected and enfeebled by insufficient sustenance so as not to be capable of bearing male children may yet be able to bear female children "

‡ Census of India, 1891 General Report, page 251

Sex. Goalpara (950) was much higher than the proportion in Nowgong (915) and as Nowgong has been very unhealthy these figures support the theory quoted by Mr Baines; but as the registration of births is much less accurate in Nowgong than in Goalpara, and as when registration is inaccurate, girls are more likely to be omitted than boys, it is impossible to place much reliance on the figures. The table in the margin showing the proportion of male to female births amongst children conceived in the hot and cold season cannot be said to be very conclusive, but as far as it goes it suggests that the Madras Report is right, and that the chances of the infant being a female are increased when the vitality of the parents is low

Number of girls to 1,000 boys born in			
December	888	June	888
January	888	July	914
February	887	August	844
March	888	September	888

Leaving aside however the vexed question of the causes which affect the sex of the unborn child it is obvious that the proportion between the sexes must largely depend upon the rate of mortality amongst those who have succeeded in getting born. It has been suggested that women have greater vitality and more power of resistance than men, and this theory derives some confirmation from the figures for the various districts of the province. Assam as a whole, has been unhealthy and if we exclude foreigners, the proportion of women to men has risen from 968 to 977 Taking the figures for those who are born and censused in the district, we find that in Cachar the ratio has increased by only 4, in Lakhimpur it has increased by 12 (from 939 to 951) and in Sibsagar it has decreased by 10 from 945 to 935. These three districts have been healthy but in Kamrup where there has been a serious decrease in population, there has been a rise in the proportion of 45 from 994 to 1 039, and in Nowgong, where the mortality has been appalling, there is an increase of 70, from 962 to 1,032 In Darrang, where the indigenous population has been as unhealthy as in Kamrup the proportion amongst those born and censused in the district is 984 as compared with 964 in 1891, and the facts recorded in Sylhet are in complete accord with the theory stated above. I have already explained how in three of the subdivisions of this district the public health has been good and in two bad, with the net result that the natural growth has been less than 2 per cent. The proportion of women, excluding foreigners, is also practically stationary being 970 in 1891 and 971 in March last; but in South Sylhet, where there has been a good deal of sickness, the ratio is as high as 981 and in North Sylhet, where there has been serious mortality it reaches 987 which is no less than 20 per mille more than it was ten years ago. It is possible that this deficiency of males is due to their having moved to healthier parts of the district, leaving their women-folk behind them though there is no reason for supposing this to have been the case, and this explanation will certainly not cover the facts in Nowgong or Darrang, and only partially those in Kamrup;* so that there seem some grounds for assuming that the female element tends to increase in those parts of the country where the public health is bad and vitality low The figures for the Lalung tribes can be quoted in support of this hypothesis. During the last ten years there has been terrible mortality among these people, and in 1901 there were 1 119 women to 1 000 men. In 1891 the proportion of women was only 1 001

Sex distribution by districts.

111. The difference between the proportion of the sexes in the various districts of the province is very great, ranging from 1 080 in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills to 862 in Lakhimpur and as there is no reason to suspect the accuracy of the enumeration in those districts in which women are in a minority these variations throw some light on the comparative vitality of the sexes.

In the hill districts, the position of women is not much inferior to that of men. Marriage is, as a rule, deferred to an age when a girl is well fitted to become a mother the strain of child-bearing is not as great as amongst more civilized races the average number of children in a family is small, and the result is that the proportion of women to men amongst those born in the hill districts and censused in the province (1 061) is higher than in England or Germany In the Surma Valley, on the other hand girls are given in marriage at a very early age, the mortality in childbirth is in all probability high, and in the enervating climate of the plains the female constitution does not seem to be able to entirely recover from the exhausting effects of maternity The life of seclusion imposed upon women by the customs of the country can hardly be conducive to good health, and, as girls are less welcome additions to a family than boys, it is possible that a certain portion of the deficiency is due to neglect in early life In Assam Proper however we meet with a different set of conditions. The great majority of the women move about as freely

			1891	1901
Proportion of women to 1,000 men amongst persons born in district and censused in province.	Nowgong	...	1,016	977
	Kamrup	...	981	968

as the men, marriage is deferred to a more reasonable date, and when it takes place it is the father of the bridegroom who is put to expense, and not the father of the bride, so there is nothing strange in finding a preponderance of women in Kamrup and Nowgong, and a fairly high ratio amongst those born and censused in the district of Darrang The same conditions hold good in Upper Assam, yet amongst the district born of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the proportion is only 935 and 951 Sex

It is difficult at first sight to suggest any explanation of such a marked contrast between Upper and Central Assam It cannot be due to omission of women, as there is probably no district in which a more accurate census was taken than in Sibsagar, where there is a large and unusually intelligent staff The same holds good of Lakhimpur, for, though this district is not particularly easy to census, the castes by which it is peopled would have no objection to giving information about their women, so there is no reason why one sex should be omitted more than the other, while the fact that the proportion has been unusually low at each of the last three enumerations* seems to justify us in assuming that the deficiency is a genuine one It may perhaps be thought that the small proportion of Animistic persons in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur is the cause of the excess of males, but I do not believe that this explanation is the correct one Below 5, the girls exceed the boys in numbers, but at all the successive periods of life, except 15—20 in Lakhimpur, the men are in a substantial majority, and it is evident that there is some cause prejudicial to female life at the later ages

The real explanation must, I think, be that the figures for 1901 for Kamrup and Nowgong are abnormal, and are due to the exceptional unhealthiness of the last ten years, and I venture to put forward the following theory, which is in accordance, to some extent at any rate, with the ascertained facts In Europe, as in India, women are exposed to the strain of maternity, but in a temperate climate, where marriage is deferred to a reasonable age, and child-bearing takes place under favourable conditions, the effect produced on female life by this strain† is not more serious than the effect produced on male life by exposure, work, and dissipation, and the net result is that women exceed the men in numbers In a hot climate great fertility seems to be attainable only at the expense of the sex upon whom is laid the burden of the reproduction of the species, and this phenomenon is to be seen in Europe as well as in India, for in Italy, where we find a deficiency of women, the average family‡ is unusually large We should, therefore, expect to find an excess of women in the hilly parts of the province, where the relations of the sexes are not unlike those prevailing in Europe, and a deficiency in the plains, and this is what, broadly speaking, the census figures disclose The excess of women in Nowgong§ I attribute to the greater resistant capacity of the female, to which I have already referred, and it only remains to consider why there should be fewer women in Upper Assam than in Sylhet and Cachar

The best explanation that I can offer is that, though the conditions of female life in Sylhet are bad, those in Sibsagar are worse Life behind the *purdah* can hardly be conducive to health, but it is quite conceivable that stooping in a field of mud transplanting paddy seedlings under a July sun is still less so, and I should be inclined to ascribe the deficiency of women in Upper Assam to hard work carried on under unfavourable conditions, coupled with excessive child-bearing

I am aware that an entirely opposite view has been taken of the matter, and in 1891, an excess of women in Chhattisgarh was ascribed to the fact that they were "employed in agricultural and other out-door pursuits, and the strength and physique thus acquired secure them a longer span of life than is enjoyed by their wealthier, but more effeminate, sisters in other districts" But, whatever may be the case in the Central Provinces, I can hardly believe that in Assam hard work in the plains during the rainy season can tend to prolong the days either of man or woman

In brief, in temperate climates, where families run small, women preponderate, in the plains, women are in a minority, which is especially pronounced in those districts in which they have to labour in the fields, but where public health is particularly bad, and the men are exposed to an abnormal strain, the greater resistant capacity of the woman comes into play, and she approaches or even exceeds the other sex in numbers

		1901	1891	1881
* Proportion of women to 1 000 men amongst those born and censused in the district.	Sibsagar	935	945	934
	Lakhimpur	951	939	957

† The proportion of women who never marry is much higher in Europe than in India, but this need hardly be taken into account, as matrimony seems to be conducive to health in this quarter of the world, *vide* Newsholme's Vital Statistics, page 124.

‡ Number of births to 100 marriages (A D 1876), Italy 515, England 463

§ In Kamrup, there is not an excess of women, if allowance is made for emigration

Sex.

Proportion of sexes at different ages.

112. Taking the population of the province as a whole, and excluding tea gardens we find that females are in a majority below 5 that they are in a small minority between 5 and 10 and are largely in defect at the next age period, when there are only four girls to every five boys. Between 15 and 25 the women preponderate, but after that the men are in a majority till the period of old age is reached Though the number of girl babies under one exceeds that of boys there is no reason to suppose that Assam is any exception to the general law of an excess of male births. The death-rate amongst infants is extremely high * boys are notoriously more difficult to rear than girls, and if the girls have gained as much on their brothers in the first year of life as they do in the second and third they must have been in a considerable minority at birth The great deficiency between 10 and 15 is as much apparent as real as will be seen by a glance at the figures in the margin which show the actual excess or defect of females at each year from 9 to 14 in 100 000 of each sex. From this it is evident that boys have a pronounced tendency to return themselves as 10 or 12 ; and in the Chapter on Age it will be shown that women have a marked preference for the three years 18 20 and 22 a preference which goes far to explain the predominance of females between 15 and 25 It is impossible, in fact, to place much reliance upon these age returns. In England, the death-rate of females is higher than that of males between 10 and 15 and 15 and 20 and this no doubt is true, though to a greater extent in Assam ; but the great deficiency between 10 and 15 is, as I have said chiefly due to lumping by boys on the ages of 10 and 12 and to a tendency to return unmarried girls as 7 or 8 and married girls as 16 18, or 20. The decrease in women over 25 is no doubt genuine enough, and must be ascribed to the fact that women in Assam Proper at any rate, are as much exposed to the unfavourable influences of the climate as men and are worn out by their special burden of child-bearing Their families are, as a rule large, and, as I have already pointed out, large families even in the warmer parts of Europe, do not seem to be conducive to longevity amongst the mothers.

	Females.
10	+ 434
11	+ 411
12	+ 33
13	− 671
14	− 88
15	− 180

Sex by age and religion.

113. Subsidiary Table IV shows the proportion of females to males alive at each age period for the main religions and in the different divisions of the province. In the Brahmaputra Valley the figures for Hindus and Muhammadans are so seriously affected by immigration that they scarcely repay examination, but in the Surma Valley it appears that, though the proportion of women is slightly higher amongst the Muhammadans than amongst the Hindus it is chiefly due to lumping on the ages between 15 and 25 when the proportion of women is obviously incorrect. After 25, the Muhammadan woman has a shorter life than the Hindu, the average number at each of the higher age periods being 884 in the one case and 824 in the other The explanation is probably to be found in the greater fertility of the Muhammadan women, a fertility which in this country seems to be incompatible with old age. Amongst Animistic persons, girls below 5 outnumber the boys, between 5 and 15 the girls are in a minority but between 15 and 30 exceed the men in numbers. Over 30 in the Assam Valley the males are always in a majority but in the hills the females predominate at 30 to 35 40 to 45, and from 55 onwards. It is impossible however to attach much importance to these figures, which are largely the result of the extraordinary inaccuracy of the female age returns but thus much is clear that amongst Animistic people the value of a woman's life, even in the valley is nearly as great as that of a man, while in the hills it is slightly higher

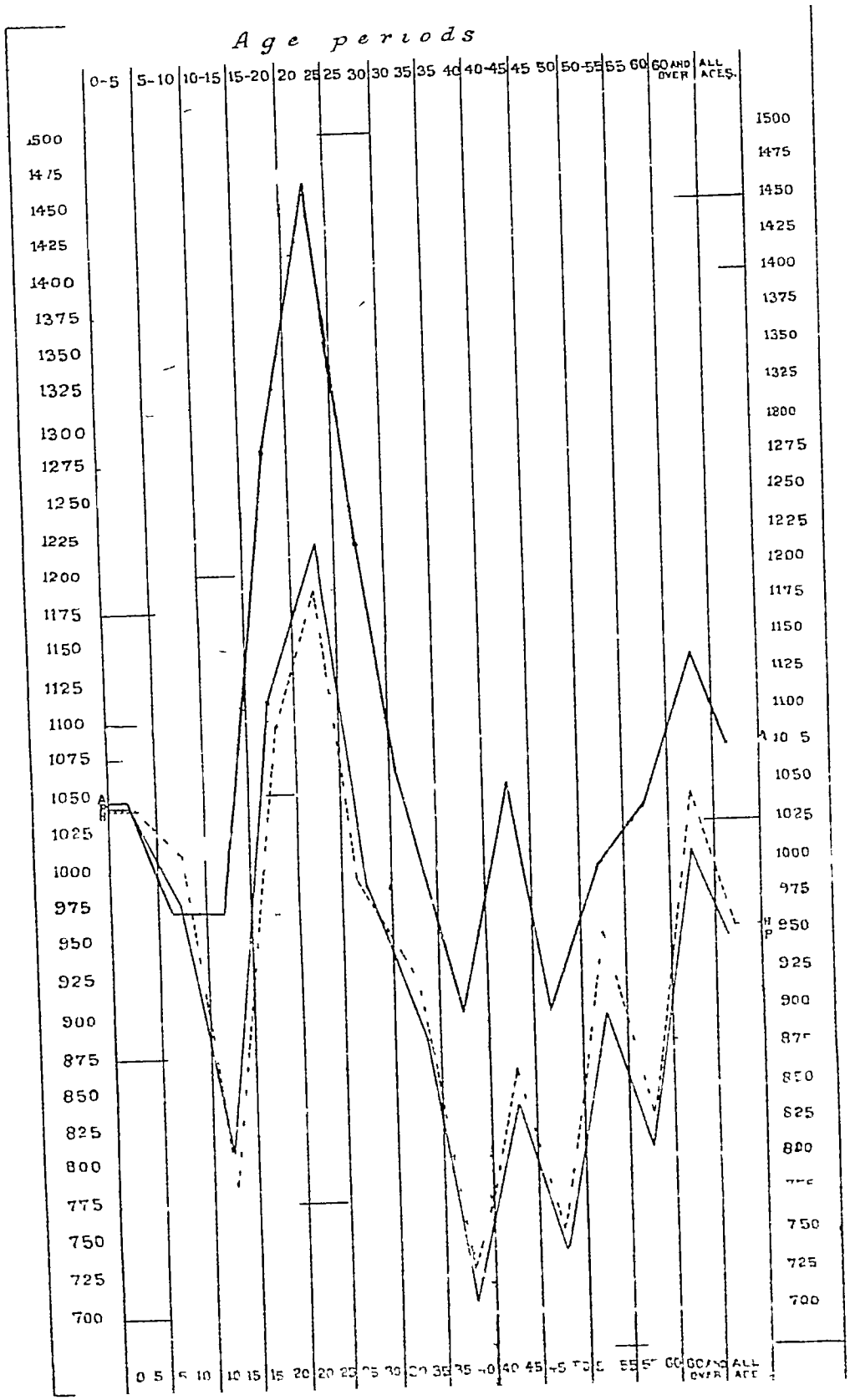
The total shortage of women in the province is 161 041 which is slightly less than the figures at the last census, but largely in excess of those for 1881 Immigration is however chiefly responsible for these results, and if foreigners are excluded the deficiency decreases at each successive census, the figures being 1881 (79,842) 1891 (78 643) 1901 (63,559)

Sex by castes.

114 Subsidiary Table VII shows the number of women to 1,000 men in different castes and tribes. The Lushai heads the list, with 1 191 The Superintendent of the Hills informs me that the Lushais themselves acknowledge that women are in a majority amongst them, but he is unable to offer any explanation of the extraordinarily large preponderance disclosed by the census. Next come the Lalung and the Khasi with 1,119 and 1 118. Both of these tribes profess Animism, and the districts in which they live have been especially unhealthy during the last decade, so that it is probable that the mortality among males has been abnormal. Of the eight castes amongst whom the females are at a premium, the Ganak is the only one which can lay claim to social distinction, as Khatri is the name usually

1 Bengal in 1899 it was 216 per mille.

Diagram showing the proportion of females to 1,000 males at different age periods.



Sex.

assumed by Manipuris, but a deficiency of women is by no means confined to castes standing high in the Brahmanical scale, as the Namasudra and the Chutiya have only 957 women to 1,000 men, and the Kachari only 954, though the great majority of this tribe are Animistic The Brahman and Kayastha are at the bottom of the list, but the deficiency of women is no doubt partially due to the immigration of foreigners belonging to these castes, while the Kayasthas are suspected of giving their daughters to wealthy bridegrooms of lower castes, and thereby depriving them of their inherited position in the Hindu social system The highest pure Assamese castes, after the Brahman and Ganak, are the Kalita and Kewat, and they have a smaller proportion of women than the race castes, such as the Ahom, Chutiya, and Koch

Sex.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

General proportion of the sexes by natural divisions and districts.

Natural divisions and districts.	Females to 1,000 males.			
	1901.	1891.	1881.	1871.
Cachar Plains	9 3	89	873	857
Sylhet	964	957	969	953
Total Surma Valley	956	947	956	943
Goalpara	903	9	947	1,000
Kamrup	1,0	976	960	9 9
Darrang	9 6	906	9 3	99
Nowgong	963	936	935	997
Sibsagar	896	903	908	9 9
Lakhimpur	862	803	807	874
Total Brahmaputra Valley	924	923	93	933
Total Plains	940	935	943	938
Lushai Hills	3	9	—	—
North Cachar	49 (,003)	1,035	984	,000
Naga Hills	984	968	982	,000
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	1,080	,022	1,103	,068
Garo Hills	974	986	957	,000
Total Hill Districts	985	,0 9	,022	,037
Manipur	,037	—	,0 7	—
Total Province	949	943	952	945

North Cachar (1901).—The figure within brackets shows the proportion, excluding foreigners.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Proportion of females t ,000 males in Assam and other c untries

Province or country.	Females to 1,000 males.	Province or country.	Females to 1,000 males.
Assam—		Central Provinces, 90	,03
(a) Total Province, 90	949	North-Western Provinces, 90	937
(b) Province, excluding foreigners, 90	977	Punjab 90	8 3
Ditto ditto, 89	963	Madras,	,037
Ditto ditto, 88	966	Italy 88	925
(c) Foreigners, 90	777	France, 89	,014
Bengal—	—	Greece, 896	93
(a) Total Bengal, 90	998	Germany, 895	,037
(b) British territory	999·8	United Kingdom, including army navy and merchant men abroad, 89	1,048
(c) Dacca Division,	972		
(d) Rajshahi Division,	934		
(e) Chittagong	,004		

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Propert n of females t ,000 males, excl d g the f reigners i the Plains districts f Assam

Districts.	1901.	1891.	1881.
Cachar Plains	9 3	903	905
Ditto, proportion for persons born and enumerated in the district	979	972	970
Sylhet	87	970	97
Goalpara	907	979	976
Kamrup	1,033	979	968
Ditto, proportion for persons born and enumerated in the district	,037	974	970
Darrang	947	913	913
Nowgong	,005	919	947
Ditto, proportion for persons born and enumerated in the district	1,032	90	954
Sibsagar	906	9 8	914
Ditto, proportion for persons born and enumerated in the district	935	915	914
Lakhimpur	899	914	938
Ditto, proportion for persons born and enumerated in the district	93	937	957

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Number of females to 1,000 males at each age by natural divisions and religions

Age period	SURMA VALLEY			BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY				HILL DISTRICTS.			MANIPUR.		
	All religions	Hindus	Muhammadans.	All religions	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Animistic.	All religions.	Hindus.	Animistic.	All religions.	Hindus.	Animistic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
0—1	1,009	996	1,018	1,018	1,010	1,052	1,033	1,037	1,021	1,046	1,012	1,006	1,017
1—2	1,034	1,034	1,037	1,045	1,039	1,062	1,047	1,045	993	1,049	1,017	947	1,098
2—3	1,057	1,069	1,047	1,072	1,064	1,052	1,109	1,045	1,023	1,047	1,041	970	1,161
3—4	1,079	1,082	1,077	1,056	1,067	1,058	1,024	1,046	901	1,053	1,004	970	1,081
4—5	1,027	1,029	1,025	1,028	1,033	973	1,035	1,036	1,034	1,031	1,056	1,025	1,110
0—5	1,040	1,040	1,040	1,043	1,042	1,036	1,050	1,042	991	1,045	1,025	988	1,100
5—10	999	1,009	991	959	961	957	956	972	962	972	962	927	1,031
10—15	774	783	763	817	804	760	910	943	768	970	923	903	944
15—20	1,157	1,095	1,220	1,039	996	1,031	1,264	1,193	712	1,283	1,151	1,156	1,134
20—25	1,242	1,189	1,299	1,217	1,205	1,117	1,372	1,189	441	1,465	1,122	1,129	1,112
25—30	984	989	976	981	982	845	1,092	964	365	1,221	1,149	1,046	1,420
30—35	907	921	892	846	837	750	976	866	309	1,060	1,102	1,037	1,213
35—40	699	727	666	676	659	607	830	768	262	900	954	879	1,074
40—45	865	861	872	775	774	670	860	929	359	1,055	976	1,097	885
45—50	730	752	701	709	713	581	780	821	322	903	908	929	868
50—55	939	953	921	832	843	851	798	936	518	595	1,114	1,155	1,068
55—60	773	827	695	770	768	634	873	977	523	1,034	1,019	1,023	1,028
60 and over	962	1,044	873	1,002	1,017	1,021	963	1,110	777	1,138	1,211	1,283	1,113
All ages	956	955	957	924	916	873	1,091	985	522	1,077	1,037	1,019	1,072

Sex.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Proportion of females to 1,000 males at each age period

Age.	Females to 1,000 males. Including tea gardens.	Excluding tea gardens.	Age.	Females to 1,000 males. Including tea gardens.	Excluding tea gardens.
0—1	1,0 6	,913	25—30	986	957
1—2	,939	,937	30—35	883	891
2—3	,962	1,00	35—40	797	748
3—4	,969	,958	40—45	835	867
4—5	,990	1,020	45—50	739	754
0—5	,04	,998	50—55	898	903
5—10	978	986	55—60	814	805
0—15	8	8,01	60 and over	,008	,007
15—20	1 3	183	All ages	949	950
20—25	,912				

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VI

Actual excess or defect of females by natural divisions and districts.

Natural divisions and districts.	Number of females in excess (+) or in defect (—). 1901.	1891.	1881.	1872.
Cachar Plains	— 8,83	— 1,204	— 9,854	— 15,7 9
Sylhet	— 40,372	— 47,263	— 30,56	— 41,
Total Surma Valley	— 59, 03	— 68,487	— 50,4 5	— 56,840
Goalpara	— 23,3 8	— 20,053	— 2,066	+ 1
Kamrup	+ 3,449	— 7,809	— 13,162	— 2,605
Darrang	— 14,747	— 5,000	— ,502	— 9,000
Nowgong	— 4,830	— ,44	— 10,38	— 9,824
Sibsagar	— 36,00	— 24 7 3	— 10, 3	— 13,30
Lakhimpur	— 27,322	— 8,755	— ,777	— 8, 7
Total Brahmaputra Valley	— 103,769	— 98,673	— 80,00	— 61,502
Total Plains	— 6 ,872	— 67,160	— 30,416	—12 ,432
Lushai Hills	+ 4,436	— 2,041	—	—
North Cachar	— 3,898	+ 329	— 160	—
Naga Hills	— 97	— 53	— ,322	+
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	+ 7,808	+ 8,002	+ 8,274	+ 4,652
Garo Hills	— ,796	— 856	— 9,354	
Total Hill Districts	— 4,370	+ 4,520	+ 4,438	+ 4,653
Manipur	+ 5,20	—	+ 1,096	—
Total Province	— 6 ,041	— 62,570	— 24,082	—110,779
Province, excluding persons born outside the boundaries	— 63,359	— 78,643	— 79,242	—

Manipur, 1872.—Census papers destroyed in the mutiny.
Lushai 1881, 1891 and 1901, and Manipur 1891.—Not enumerated.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VII

Number of women to 1,000 men in different castes

Lushai	1, 9	Jogi	989	Namasudra	957
Lalung	9	Garo	983	Chasi	957
Khasi	1, 8	Mikir	973	Kachari	954
Garak	,938	Koch	970	Kalbertta	944
Boria	,937	Das*	967	Kewat	944
Shaha	,914	Miri	956	Kalita	943
Kaiori	,9 3	Aleem	9	Teli	904
Bhoimali	,908	Nadiyal (Dom Pasal)	958	Kayastha	863
		Brahmin	8		

Includes also Halwa Das, Sunka Das, and Sadri.

CHAPTER VI

MARRIAGE

115 Figures illustrating the conjugal condition of the total population of the province will be found in Subsidiary Tables I and II, which show the distribution by age periods of ten thousand persons in each of the three forms of civil condition, and the distribution by civil condition of ten thousand persons in each of the main age periods There is, however, so much difference in the practices enjoined or permitted by the various religions, and even by the same religion in different parts of Assam, that it is little use considering the figures for the province as a whole without first discussing those for the main forms of belief Marriag

Marriage amongst the Assamese The hom pura ceremony

116 It is by no means easy to decide what constitutes a valid marriage in Assam Proper, and the enumerators were told to accept the statements of the persons concerned, and to enter them as married if they returned themselves as such, even though they had not complied with all the requirements of the Hindu law Brahmans, Ganaks, and Kayasthas, are invariably married by the *hom pura* rite, a ceremony which is being very generally adopted by other castes lower down in the scale of Hinduism The proceedings begin with the despatch to the bride's house of a present from the bridegroom, consisting of cloths, ornaments, molasses, curds and other articles of food, and on the evening before the marriage day both of the parties to the ceremony are solemnly bathed On the wedding morning, the bride is taken from her bed at dawn, anointed with buttermilk, and dressed for the reception of the groom, who, on his arrival, is placed on a wooden stool before the gate of the house, and is smeared with sandalwood and crowned with flowers The party then pass on to the place where the actual ceremony will be performed, and after a cow has been let loose,* a reminiscence of the times when Hindus killed and ate the fatted calf on all occasions of ceremony, the sacred fire of mango wood is lighted, and rice, flowers and *ghi* are thrown upon it, by the priest in the case of the lower castes, but by the bridegroom himself if he is a Brahman or Ganak The officiating priest then ties together the thumbs of the young couple with a wisp of *kusha* grass, and after the appropriate *mantras* have been pronounced, they are declared man and wife Amongst Brahmans, this part of the ceremony must be performed before the girl attains puberty When she reaches that age, the second marriage, called *Kesha Korshon* or *Shanti Bibaha*, takes place, and she is then at liberty to go and live with her husband

Marriage amongst the lower orders

117 The lower castes, however, often content themselves with the gift to the girl of cloths and ornaments, and a feast to the friends and relations, after which the bride is taken to her lover's house No fire is lighted, and the services of a Brahman are not required This ceremony is called *Kharumoni pindha* or *juron*, and is common in Upper Assam, where it is used by large numbers of persons, who live together and bring up a numerous progeny without being united by any more legal tie In Lower Assam, there is a slight elaboration of the ceremony called *agchauldia* When the bride reaches the bridegroom's house, she is seated with the groom in front of a lamp and a vessel filled with rice Their cloths are tied together, and the women of the family take up pinches of rice, wave it round their heads and throw it into the air The bridegroom then hides a ring in the vessel, which the bride has to find, and they exchange cups filled with a mixture of milk curds and honey Four of the Assamese Munsifs at present serving in the Brahmaputra Valley were of opinion that the performance of this ceremony by persons of the lower castes constituted a legal marriage, while two declined to recognise any binding force, and asserted that the woman could, if she wished, leave the man, and be united by the *hom pura* ceremony to another person It is true that the latter ceremony is more common among the lower classes now than it was a generation ago, and that at village ceremonies the '*abiyai*,' as those who have not performed the *hom* ceremony are called, occupy a slightly lower position than the '*biyai*', but, inasmuch as the unions are usually of a permanent nature, the offspring are accepted as legitimate heirs, and no social stigma attaches to the contracting parties, it is only reasonable to treat them as married persons, and not as persons living in a state of concubinage This view is upheld by an Assamese official, whose social position justifies me in attaching

* This is the orthodox practice, which is more honoured in the breach than in the observance

arriage. considerable weight to his opinions on the customs of his fellow countrymen I was informed by this gentleman that not only did the *monipindha* ceremony constitute in his eyes a valid marriage for the lower castes but that he was prepared to assign the same position to the practice of obtaining a wife by servi e. The *Çaponiya* as he is called lives with his father in law for a specified term and works on his farm At the end of this period of bondage he gives a feast to the villagers and takes his bride to his own house, but from the date that he enters the house of the father in-law he is allowed unrestricted* access to the girl, provided that she has attained the age of puberty and she is in fact considered to be his wife though she is still living in her father's home This form of marriage is however looked upon with some contempt as only a poor man will consent to work for his bride in this manner

Another interesting survival in Assam is a modified form of marriage by capture. Assamese boys and girls have plenty of opportunity of becoming acquainted with one another and falling in love but the price demanded for the bride is often more than her lover can afford to pay When this is the case, the girl sometimes arranges that she shall be the victim of an abduction By special request the lover and a few of his friends are in waiting at the appointed place and as the object of his affections is passing along with her companions he descends upon her and carries her off amidst tears and lamentations which are more hearty than genuine. Having secured possession of the girl it is generally possible to come to terms with the parents.

In the Surma Valley the marriage customs of the Hindus are similar to those of Eastern Bengal.

Universality of marriage amongst Hindus.

118 Subsidiary Table III shows the distribution of Hindus by civil condition and sex at each of the main age periods. The first thing to be noticed is the extreme prevalence of marriage, only 4 per cent. of the men over 40 and 1 per cent of the women being still single. Taking the population as a whole, 54 per cent are bachelors and 38 per cent. spinsters the corresponding figures in England being 62 and 59, and, great though the difference is it would be still more pronounced were it not for the large fore gn population of the lower grades of Hindu society amongst which is found an abnormally high proportion of single men and women The age of marriage for boys is much later than that for girls but there are no signs of a tendency which has been noticed in Bengal, to defer the time for undertaking the responsibilities of a wife and family the proportion of bachelors between 10 and 20 being lower than in 1891 The great majority of the people are, however agriculturists, who have little or no inducement to refrain from marriage on economic grounds, and though the *bhadra lok* or upp r classes may have some difficulty in supporting their families, their numbers are too small to produce any appreciable effect upon the total for the province

Age of marriage.

119 Amongst boys, early marriage is far from being the rule. Eighty five per cent. of the lads between 15 and 20 are still bachelors, and even between 20 and 40 the proportion of husbands is lower than amongst those who have passed t eir fortieth birthday The customs that govern a woman s life are, however very different Between 15 and 20 only 22 per cent. are still unwed and between 20 and 40 there are only three women out of every hundred who have not performed the marriage ceremony

Child marriage.

120 This brings us to the consideration of the strange phenomenon of child marriage, which is described by Mr Risley as being without a parallel (at any rate on so large a scale) elsewhere in the world and which cannot be referred to any of those primitive instincts which have usually determined the relations of the sexes. Three theories have been put forward as to the origin of the practice. Mr Nesfield points out that in the oldest type of society a woman was exposed to a double evil the stain of communism within her own clan so long as she remained there, and the risk of forcible abduction into an alien clan where she became the wife slave of the man who captured her He sees, therefore, in infant marriage an attempt on the part of the Hindu lawgivers to protect women against these dangers by directing that they should be married to members of another clan before they reached the age at which it would be possible for them to become wives, in fact as well as in name. To this Mr Risley objects that the society depicted in the Rig and Atharva Vedas had got far beyond if indeed they ever passed through the stage of communal marriage and forcible abduction of wives and suggests that the origin of infant marriage may be found in the custom of hypergamy Many castes are divided into groups of different social ment and where this practice is in force, a man may seek a bride for his son either in his own group or in one immediately below but must marry his daughter to a husband who is at any rate not inferior to her in rank The natural result is that in the highest groups of all, the girls have difficulty in obtain

* I am told that this is not the case in Lower Assam.

ing husbands, and the father is tempted to marry his daughter whenever a favourable opportunity offers Child marriage thus became more or less of a necessity for the aristocracy, and was subsequently adopted by the lower castes, who have a natural tendency to imitate their superiors in the social scale Marriage

A third explanation is suggested by Mr O'Donnell, who writes as follows in the Bengal Census Report for 1891

When the institutes of Manu became the social law of the Hindus, and the idea of the supreme degradation involved in a marriage outside the caste group grew into a universal social axiom, a degradation which damned not only the individual, but her or his parents and the whole family, things matrimonial had reached a degree of importance too great to allow them to depend on the fancies of a love-sick maiden A woman will, it is said, go to the end of the world for the man she loves, whatever his rank in popular esteem, and the Hindu father, like a European parent, would probably have often been willing to let her have her own way, and lie in the bed she had made for herself, if she alone were concerned But when it was in the power of every girl to bring more than disgrace, in fact, social and religious ostracism, on her family, it was highly desirable that she should be fitted with a helpmate of the right caste and of the most reputable section of the caste available, before she became old enough to look around her and fix her affections on some undesirable, it might be some absolutely ruinous, alliance

It would be presumptuous on my part to express any opinion as to which of these theories is correct, but, whatever may have been the origin of the practice, the native gentlemen with whom I have discussed the matter have expressed views in accordance with those set forth by Mr O'Donnell A Hindu girl is much restricted in the choice of a husband, and there seems to be a general impression that if she is not disposed of at a very early age, she may either refuse to marry the man selected for her, or become hopelessly compromised with a detrimental At first sight it seems strange that the national lawgivers should have had so little confidence in the self-restraint and virtue of their women, as there are other nations amongst whom girls have but little voice in the choice of their husbands, but yet are expected to, and actually do, attain to a high standard of chastity, without being married at an early age, but to the native gentlemen who have favoured me with their views upon the matter, the precaution does not seem unnecessary or excessive They look upon it as a matter of vital importance that a girl should marry the man selected for her, and that she should come to him a virgin, and they seem doubtful whether these results could be obtained if she were not given away before reaching the age at which it could be conceivably possible for her to lapse from the path of virtue

It cannot be denied that the severity of the Hindu teachers is to some extent justified by the customs of the Assamese hill tribes Amongst these people, the proportion of girls who are no longer virgins on their wedding day is large, and if at the time when the ordinances prescribing child marriage were laid down, the Aryans were surrounded by peoples who were still in this stage of civilization, their leaders may perhaps be forgiven for the poor opinion they entertained with regard to female chastity Even amongst the Assamese, there is a certain amount of laxity in the prenubial relations of the sexes, and a lawgiver in Assam Proper who wished to ensure virginity in every bride would probably feel it necessary, even at the present day, to frame very stringent rules upon the subject

Utility of practice

121 Leaving aside, however, the question of the necessity of the custom as a safeguard, there can be no doubt that it is conducive to the maintenance of the Hindu joint-family system

In most countries a man forsakes father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and where this is the case, a certain degree of independence in the woman is no obstacle to a happy married life Amongst the Hindus, however, the bride is absorbed into the family of her husband, and is placed to some extent in a position of subservience to her mother in-law, and it is obvious that there would be considerable risk of friction between the parties if a grown woman, whose tastes and character were already formed was suddenly called upon to assume this rôle It must certainly make for peace and happiness in the joint family if the wives of its members are trained in early youth to obey the elder generation, though I would not venture to suggest that it was for this purpose that child marriage was ordained

Prevalence of infant marriage

122 The most extreme form of infant marriage is when one or both of the contracting parties are less than five years of age, and here, at any rate, if the figures on both occasions are equally correct, we find some improvement, as, though there has been a considerable increase in the total Hindu population, only 159 children below 5 were returned as no longer single, as compared with 411 in 1891 The sorters were directed to report every case*

* Unfortunately a considerable number were omitted from the sorters' registers, and so could not be verified On the other hand, there is reason to suppose that a certain number of married persons under 5 were altered to 12, 13, or 14 by the sorters, to avoid the trouble of making a reference; but my impression is that the actual number of persons married below 5 is smaller than that shown in the tables.

Marriage.

in which children under 5 had been entered on a married or widowed slip and the entry was sent to the officer concerned for comparison with the enumeration books, and, if necessary local enquiry In the great majority of cases it was found either that the slip had been wrongly copied, or that a mistake had been made by the enumerator and there can I think be little doubt that child marriage below 5 is extremely rare. I am told that in Kamrup a mother who has lost several children occasionally gets her infant married at a very early age with the idea that the evil fate that has hitherto dogged her family may be averted by linking the fortunes of her child with those of another; but this practice is said to be far from common and to be only resorted to in very extreme cases.

Three hundred and forty-six girls are married out of 10 000 between 5 and 10 as compared with 308 ten years ago; but between 10 and 15 the proportion of *single girls is higher than it was in 1891 67 per cent. being still unmarried*, as compared with 64 per cent. in that year Above 15 the proportion of those who have entered the marriage state increases, and the number of spinsters over 20 is very small.

128 Subsidiary Tables VI and IX show the extent to which child marriage is practised by the different castes. It is most prevalent amongst the Brahmans and Ganaks of Kamrup where 18 and 12 per cent. respectively of the girls under 12 are already married. In Sylhet the largest percentage of *married girls below that age is found amongst the Brahmans*, Jugis, Namasudras and Shahas, each of which has 9 per cent. but even such humble castes as the Dom Patni or Nadiyal and the Kaibartta marry 8 and 7 per cent of their girls before they reach the age of 12 In Assam Proper early marriage is not common except amongst the Brahmans and Ganaks. In Kamrup only 3 per cent. of *the Kalita girls under 12 are married, and 2 per cent.* of the Koch Shaha, and Kewat, but this district has to some extent been affected by the fashions of Bengal and Sibsagar and Nowgong afford a more reliable index of the customs of the Assamese. Here we find that only 2 per cent. of Brahman girls of this tender age are married, whilst out of 10 000 Nadiyal and Boria girls under 12, only 44 and 29 have performed the marriage ceremony At first sight it appears strange that in Kamrup where the mass of the people are opposed to infant marriage, the number of child brides amongst Brahmans should be higher than in Sylhet; but the explanation is probably to be found in the fact that while in the Surma Valley husbands cannot be easily obtained amongst the upper classes, and fathers are compelled to postpone the marriage of their daughters till they can discover a suitable bridegroom in Kamrup it is the *bridegroom who has to pay and the temptation is to hurry on rather than to postpone* the ceremony

Percentage of girls under 12, who are married.

Sylhet.			
Brahman	9	Dom (Patni)	—
Jugi	9	Kaibartta	
Shaha	—	Kayastha	
Namasudra		Das	
Kamrup.			
Brahman	18	Kaibartta and Kewat	
Ganak	12	Koch	
Kalita		Shaha	
Nowgong			
Boria		Nadiyal (Dom)	—
Sibsagar			
Brahman	—	Chutiya	—

124 *In the Surma Valley where Hinduism is of a more orthodox type efforts are* made to comply with the law directing that girls should be given to a husband before they attain the age of puberty and the number of unmarried women between 15 and 20 is not large Out of 10 000 single women the largest number falling in that age period *amongst any of the* castes abstracted for Sylhet is 84 amongst the Dom Patnis and the average ratio is between 50 and 60.

Out of 10,000 single girls number aged between 15 and 20—

Sylhet.			
Dom (Patni)	84	Kaibartta	60
Kayastha	64	Namasudra	57
Das	60	Shaha	50
Kamrup			
Brahman	40	Kaibartta and Kewat	400
Ganak	31	Koch	476
Kalita	300	Shaha	866
Nowgong			
Nadiyal (Dom)	68	Boria	— 700
Sibsagar			
Brahman	71	Chutiya	— 600

In Kamrup there are amongst 10 000 Brahman spinsters only 46 of that age, and amongst the Ganaks only 24. The Kalitas have as many as 262 and other castes proportions ranging from 476 amongst the Koches to 866 amongst the Chutiyas

In Assam Proper, in fact Brahmans and Ganaks are *strict with regard to infant marriage* The Kalitas are *inclined* to regard it as the better way but are very lax in their practice, and the other castes are still content to follow the custom which prevails in most parts of the world and as a rule, defer marriage till the bride is old enough to enter upon her new duties as wife and mother Girls as is only natural in a warm climate, where they develop early marry young and a large number *of them are brides before they are twenty but there is no absolute* obligation in the matter

79017

Marriage.

125 The castes which indulge in infant marriage are also opposed to the remarriage of widows In Sylhet, the practice is apparently in great disfavour amongst the better castes, as for none of those shown in Table VII is the proportion of widows between 15 and 20 much lower than that for Brahmans, amongst whom widows presumably never remarry In Assam, Brahmans and Ganaks do not remarry, but all other castes are free from prejudice on this point, the number of young widows, even amongst the Kalitas, being particularly small The difference in practice is clearly shown in the figures in the margin Of 10,000 Brahman girls in Kamrup between 15 and 20, 1,729 are widows, and for Ganaks also the figure is as high as 1,667, while Kalitas have 259, Koches 323, and the Chutiyas in Sibsagar only 111 To produce this result two causes are at work On the one hand, young widows not unfrequently remarry, on the other, the difference of age at marriage being less pronounced than amongst those who practise child marriage, the number of women who lose their husbands is also diminished

Restrictions on widow remarriage.

Number of widows amongst 10 000 women between 15 and 20

Sylhet

Brahman ..	1,001	Dom (Patni)	993
Kaibartta ..	1,180	Das	986
Shaha	1,171	Namasudra	972
Jugi	1,264	Kayastha	918

Kamrup.

Brahman ..	1,729	Shaha ..	356
Ganak	1,667	Koch ..	323
Kaibartta and Kewat	488	Kalita	259

Sibsagar

Chutiya ..	111

126 Table V illustrates the prevalence of child marriage and of widow remarriage, in Sylhet and Lower, Central and Upper Assam, and compares the state of things found there with the Animistic people in the Lushai, Khasi and Jaintia and Naga Hills In a normal state of society which has not been affected by Hindu ideas on the subject, marriage below ten is practically unknown, only 5 girls out of 10,000 of that age in the Naga Hills being married, and only 10 in the adjoining district In Sylhet, however, amongst Hindus, the number is 315, and in Goalpara, 437, but in Kamrup it sinks to 136, and in Sibsagar to as low as 56

Comparison with Animistic tribes

	Number of wives out of 10,000 girls aged— 0—10	10—15
Naga Hills	5	169
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	10	410
Sylhet ..	315	5 489
Goalpara	437	5,823
Kamrup	136	2,280
Sibsagar ..	56	1 080

Two per cent of the Animistic girls between 10 and 15 in the Naga Hills, and 4 per cent in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills are married, but in Sylhet no less than 55 per cent are wives, and in Goalpara 58 For Kamrup the figure is 23, and for Sibsagar 11, and it is thus evident that though in Assam Proper the age of marriage for girls has been depressed below the standard found in communities unaffected by Hinduism, it approaches very much more closely to that standard than to the one prescribed by Manu

127 The figures for widows between 10 and 15 are also instructive In Goalpara there are 412 to every 10,000 girls of that age, in Sylhet 281, in Kamrup 110 and in Sibsagar 38, which is lower than the rate in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills At first sight, it may be thought strange that in Goalpara, where the proportion of Animistic tribes is large, the ordinances of orthodox Hinduism should be observed more strictly than in Sylhet, but a little reflection shows that this is really what we are entitled to expect The great majority of the Hindus of Goalpara are Rajbansis, who are mostly persons of the Koch and Mech tribes, who have assumed this name on conversion to Hinduism It is only natural that they should be afraid of being suspected of Animistic practices, and with the zeal of converts they out-Hindu the Hindus in their observance of the dictates of the law

Young widows

Table IV shows clearly the difference of custom amongst Hindus in matters matrimonial in the different parts of the province Out of 10,000 girls between 10 and 15, 5,134 are married in the Surma Valley, 5,823 in Goalpara, and only 1,435 in Assam Proper Between 15 and 20, the figures are 8,433, 8,285, and 5,722 The proportion of young widows in Assam Proper is also much lower than in the Surma Valley and Goalpara

128 Table III shows how much later is the age of marriage for men than girls In 10,000 of each sex, there are only 272 men married between 10 and 15, as compared with 3,123 girls Between 15 and 20, there are only 1,386 husbands to 7,119 wives, and even between 20 and 40, the sexes are far from equal Over 40, the married males are in a large majority, the great bulk of women at that age being widows Taking the sexes as a whole, we find that while the proportion of married persons is about equal, 38 per cent of the women are single and 20 per cent widows, while 54 per cent of the males are bachelors, and less than 6 per cent are widowers Table VIII shows the same facts in a different form Between 10 and 15 there are nine married girls to every married boy of that age, and seven widows to every widower, and at subsequent age periods the number of women in the widowed state is three times that of the men

Age of marriage for men

Marriage.

Polygamy

129 Little light is thrown upon the extent to which polygamy prevails amongst the Hindus by the figures for this province, in consequence of the presence of a large number of foreigners who have left their wives at home. In Assam Proper married men are in a majority but in the Surma Valley there are 1 012 wives to every 1 000 husbands, and in Manipur 1 025. It is evident that polygamy is far from common, but it is not possible to say how many husbands have a second wife as the surplus may all be absorbed by one or two rich men.

Marriage amongst Muhammadans.

Proportion of sexes	Males.	Females.
Hindu	51	39
Muhammadan	56	44
Animistic	54	47
Religionless	60	40

Married	Males.	Females.
Hindu	46	41
Muhammadan	59	44
Animistic	41	46
Religionless	56	33

Widowed	Males.	Females.
Hindu		59
Muhammadan		56
Animistic		13
Religionless		1

180 Marriage is in no sense a religious obligation amongst Muhammadans, and they are as free to consult their natural inclinations in the matter as Christians or hill men; but they have been to a great extent affected by their Hindu neighbours The statement in the margin shows that amongst men the proportion of bachelors is larger than amongst either Hindus or Animists and that of husbands and widowers smaller; while amongst women the proportion of wives is large and of widows comparatively small. The Muhammadan does not as a rule, marry as early as the Hindu, but between 20 and 40 the proportion of bachelors is larger amongst Hindus than amongst the followers of the Prophet. This is probably due partly to the absence of any religious motive for celibacy and partly to the fact that amongst immigrants most of whom are Hindus marriage is not so prevalent as in the general population. There is also a marked objection to a solitary life, and the proportion of Mussalman widowers over 20 is little more than half of that prevailing amongst the Hindus. This no doubt is due to the fact that many of the followers of the latter religion cannot afford to marry again—a disability under which the Muhammadan does not labour to such a marked extent as failing all else, he can, at any rate, obtain a widow with little difficulty Girls as a rule marry earlier than amongst the Hindus only 62 per cent. between 10 and 15 being single as compared with 67 per cent for that religion. In 1891 the corresponding figures were 59 and 64. The explanation is to be found in the fact that most of the Muhammadans live in Sylhet and Goalpara where as I have already shown, it is the fashion to marry early while the Hindu population includes a large number of Assamese and low caste foreigners who have not adopted the practice

The proportion of widows is not large. Out of 10 000 girls between 15 and 20 there are 474 Muhammadan to 666 Hindu widows, and between 20 and 40 the figures are 1 581 and 2 091 Over 40 Muhammadan widows are commoner than Hindus. The explanation is no doubt to be found in the fact that the elderly Mussalman widower remarries more freely than does the Hindu and therefore more often leaves a relict to mourn his death

Proportion of wives to husbands.

181 Subsidiary Table VIII shows that there are 1 011 wives to every 1 000 husbands. As I have pointed out above these figures give us but little idea of the extent to which polygamy prevails as a certain number of married men are immigrants who have left their wives in their own country It is obvious however, that in a country where the men outnumber the women, a second wife is a luxury, which can be enjoyed but by few

Animistic tribes. Marriage customs.

182 There are considerable differences in the marriage customs of the various hill tribes but as a rule, the ceremony takes place at a much later date than amongst the Hindus or Muhammadans and girls prior to marriage are not required to remain chaste. Exceptions can of course be found to every proposition laid down upon this subject and amongst the Garos, many girls marry at an early age, while the Hojais impose a fine, though a light one, for unchastity and the Lhotas have a preference for virgin brides Amongst the Kukis, where marriage by service is common a strange custom is in force. Cohabitation is freely permitted during the time that the lover is serving in the house of his father-in-law and pregnancy entails no disgrace, but the girl must not bring forth a living child. About the seventh month after conception an old woman skilled in these matters is called in. This worthy dame locates the position of the baby's head in the womb and strikes it a sharp blow with a flat stone, with the result that premature delivery takes place, and the child is born dead. This strange practice is fraught with considerable risk for the young mother and seems to be a survival from a time when prenubial laxity was not permitted. As a rule, however the fullest freedom is allowed to the girls of the village, and little or no disgrace attaches to the birth of illegitimate children, provided that their parentage is acknowledged. Marriage is usually by purchase or service the

price of a wife varying considerably in different parts of the province. Amongst the Kacharis a girl costs from Rs 60 to Rs. 100, the Mikirs and Lalungs of Nowgong generally consider a feast to the villagers sufficient, and amongst the Padam Abors, a few dried squirrels are all that is asked of the groom The Miris and Daflas, however, pay heavily, and amongst the Miris, near Sadiya, there is the following curious custom, which is thus described by Mr F J Needham, C I E Marriage.

No betrothal is ever agreed to, unless at the time a female belonging to the bridegroom's family is promised for some male member of the bride's, that is to say, the first preliminary is for both parties to contract to exchange a female from each of their families For instance, if A desires B's daughter as a wife for his son, he must agree to give B some female member of his family in marriage to some male member of B's, but it does not necessarily follow that the two marriages take place simultaneously, for it will often happen that one of the contracting parties has no female of age at the time, though it would be much better if such were the case, for it is here that the shoe pinches, and the rottenness of their marriage custom shows itself

Let us suppose that A, after promising a female from his own family, has secured B's daughter for his son, and that the marriage has been completed according to custom, that two years or so later B, finding that A's daughter (or some other female promised) has reached the age of puberty, asks for her as a wife for his son, or other male relative, and the reply from A is, "she has gone off with some one else," what happens?

B, acting strictly according to the custom of his tribe, takes back his daughter from A's son, although she may have had two or more children by him (for they have then been living together virtually as man and wife for five years), and makes her over to C, who promises his sister, or some other female relative, in exchange for her If after a time C likewise fails to fulfil his part of the contract, B takes her away from C, and makes her over to D, and so on, and so on Cases of the kind are constantly happening, and cause untold misery to more persons than one, and I have known more than one case since I came here of a girl having been married to four or five different men, and having children by each one

Adultery is with some tribes a more or less trifling matter, which can be settled by the imposition of a fine of a pig or a few rupees, but with others it is an extremely serious offence Mr. Colquhoun informs me that amongst the Gachi Miris a very heavy fine is imposed, and in extreme cases the guilty couple are tied face to face, killed, and thrown into the river Mr Needham reports that amongst the Padam Abors the injured husband is allowed to strike the seducer a severe blow over the head with the back of his *dao*, and then to mulct him in damages, while, if the village elders, who enquire into the matter, are of opinion that the woman rather courted than avoided the attentions of her lover, she is stripped and tied up in the *môshup* (village hall) and publicly subjected to a form of physical punishment which, to the savage mind, must seem peculiarly appropriate to the offence of which she was guilty To the minds of the hillman a wife is a chattel, purchased and paid for, whose value is diminished if she is visited by another, and their attitude towards adultery is summed up in the remark once made to me by a Miri—"I have paid for my wife, why should any one else use her?" Widow marriage is not only tolerated, but is frequently enjoined, the widow amongst the Garos and some other of the tribes in the north-eastern corner of the valley being taken over with the rest of the property by the heir of her late husband

133 From the statement in the margin it appears that though Animistic girls marry much later than their Hindu or Musalmani sisters, the boys select their partners at an earlier date than the followers of these two religions At first sight, this seems strange, as it might have been supposed that the generous treatment accorded by a hill girl to her lover would have tempted men to defer the date of marriage, but, as the figures are borne out by those of 1891, it is evident that amongst these tribes the premature concession of marital rites in no way tends to curb the desire for a more permanent union Between 20 and 40 the wives slightly exceed the husbands in numbers, but after 40 there is a great excess of married men, widows of that age having naturally much difficulty in obtaining a second husband

Number married out of 10 000 of same age

	10—15		15—20	
	Males	Females.	Males	Females
Hindus ..	272	3,123	1 386	7 119
Muhammadans	178	3 661	1 399	8,710
Animistic	354	1,246	1 909	4 697

134 Christians, as a rule, marry later than the followers of the other religions Between 5 and 10, only 13 persons were returned as married, and even between 10 and 15, there are only 92 brides, the number of married girls out of 10,000 of that age being only 475, as compared with 1,246 amongst the Animists, and 3,123 amongst the Hindus Above 15 the proportion is much the same as amongst the Animistic peoples Amongst men, too, there is a tendency to defer the date of marriage Between 10 and 15, there are 77 husbands out of 10,000 boys of that age, as compared with 272 amongst the Hindus, and at the next age period only 929 have wives, as compared with the 1,386

Christians

rriage. Hindu husbands. Taking the population as a whole, the figures for men are much the same as those for Muhammadans, while those for women resemble more closely the distribution of the Animistic tribes There are in the province 155 more Christian wives then husbands. This is due to the fact that in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Christian wife is not unfrequently yoked with the unbelieving husband.

Comparison with previous enumerations.

185. Subsidiary Table II shows the distribution of the population by civil condition at the last three enumerations. The proportion of married men is higher than in 1891 but lower than it was twenty years ago. The proportion of widowers has also increased as is only natural in an unhealthy decade. There has evidently been no change in the marriage customs of the province during the last ten years. Twenty-six per mille of the boys between 10 and 15 were or had been married in 1891, and 27 per mille at the last census; and between 15 and 40 the proportion of husbands has only varied by 1 in 10 000. The proportion of unmarried girls above 10 is considerably higher than it was in 1891 but I do not know that we are entitled to draw any inferences from this, as the inclusion of the Animistic people of Lushai and Manipur is probably enough to account for the difference; neither can we say that the fact that there are more widows now than there were ten years ago is a sign of widow remarriage falling into disfavour as the ratio of increase amongst women who have lost their husbands is not nearly as high as that amongst husbands who have lost their wives.

186. It is unsatisfactory however to find that the reproductive section of the population, *i.e.*, married women between 15 and 40, is steadily decreasing In 1881 out of 10,000 women of this age, 7,983 were wives, in 1891, 7 913, and in 1901 7 667 The decrease in the number of wives during the last twenty years is almost entirely accounted for by the increase in the number of women who have lost their husbands. The corresponding figures for Bengal and the Central Provinces, for the census of 1901 are 8 217 and 8,017 so it is evident that Assam is to some extent hampered in the race for population by a dearth of mothers.* Taking the population as a whole, 55 per cent. of the men are single, 40 are married, and 5 widowers, figures which correspond very closely with those of the previous census. Amongst women, 41 per cent. are single, 41 per cent. are married, and 18 per cent. widows, the difference in each case between these figures and those for 1891 being less than one.

1 the Central Provinces, 167 per mille of the total population are married women between 15 and 40, in Bengal 164, and in Assam only 37

Marriage.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I.

Distribution of 10,000 of each sex by age and civil condition

Age	Males.			Females		
	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married.	Widowed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0—1	628	.	.	908		.
1—2	314	. .		464		.
2—3	543	.	.	820		
3—4	547	.	..	826	.	
4—5	546		.	799	. .	.
0—5	2,578	0 7	0 7	3,817	2	1
5—10	2,718	21	14	3,695	103	21
10—15	1,980	73	35	1,632	681	76
15—20	1,143	277	143	485	1,531	281
20—25	740	817	471	187	1,957	521
25—30	457	1,645	1,023	70	1,999	801
30—35	185	1,841	1,272	40	1,512	1,091
35—40	82	1,522	1,184	21	827	1,005
40—45	53	1,331	1,302	22	679	1,460
45—50	19	720	843	7	259	867
50—55	20	763	1,192	10	247	1,388
55—60	6	284	550	3	76	501
60 and over	19	705	1,970	11	127	1,987
Total	10,000	9,999 7	9,999 7	10,000	10,000	10,000

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Distribution by civil condition and main age periods of 10,000 of each sex at the last three censuses

Age	Males.									Females.								
	Unmarried.			Married.			Widowed.			Unmarried.			Married.			Widowed.		
	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			13	14	15	16	17	18	19
0—10	9,058	9,058	9,097.5	30	16	9		3		9,849	9,850	9,983	138	130	75	3	8	
10—15 ...	8,730	9,740	9,835	195	238	150	14	20	14	6,948	6,60	6,761	3,213	3,276	3,140	140	173	99
15—40	3,332	3,667	3,983	5,975	5,974	6,060	673	359	287	764	693	761	7,867	7,813	7,083	549	304	256
40 and over	347	298	382	2,188	2,318	2,302	1,495	1,288	1,298	126	88	108	2,304	2,583	2,084	6,283	6,520	5,807
All ages	5,515	5,802	5,378	3,084	3,008	4,277	471	410	345	4 97	4,158	4 14	4,188	4,156	4,304	765	700	582

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Distribution of 10,000 of each sex of principal religions by age and civil condition.

Age.	Hindus.						Mahomedans.						Christians.						Animists.					
	Males.			Females.			Males.			Females.			Males.			Females.			Males.			Females.		
	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.	Unmarried.	Married.	Widowed.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
0—5	9,908	4	9·3	9,995	3·3	3	9,986	3	3	9,993	6		9,990	...	...	10,000	...	...	9,998		...	9,997	3·3	0
5—10	9,934	60	6	9,838	146	16	9,951	47		9,745	251	13	9,927	73		9,977	19	4	9,843	51	3	9,763	133	
10—15 ...	9,710	273	18	6,713	3,113	164	9,815	78	7	6,188	3,664	152	9,918	77	5	9,654	275	3	9,652	354	4	8,700	1,246	50
15—40	8,371	1,586	101	9,915	7,119	966	8,547	1,389	54	8,18	8,71	674	9,434	529	37	4,804	4,848	347	7,629	2,098	19	6,705	4,839	456
40 and over ...	437	7,706	1,857	133	9,685	6,893	416	8,876	908	78	6,788	7,133	648	8,217	1,135	78	4,843	5,073	81	8,454	1,335	0	5,183	4,606
All ages ...	5,4 7	4,060	373	3,835	6,139	2,026	5,886	3,798	316	4,804	4,164	1,371	5,695	2,758	337	4,788	4,464	1,060	5,435	4,008	430	4,887	4,622	1,37

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Distribution by civil condition of 10,000 Hindus of each sex at each age period in the Surma Valley, Assam Proper, and Goalpara.

Natural divisions or districts	0—10			10—15			15—20			20—40			40 and over		
	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Males															
Surma Valley	9,961	34	5	9,684	302	14	8,507	1,442	51	2,929	6,641	430	526	7,757	1,717
Goalpara	9,959	38	3	9,562	423	15	8,064	1,872	64	2,565	6,983	452	353	8,082	1,565
Brahmaputra Valley, excluding Goalpara	9,968	30	2	9,743	234	23	8,598	1,242	160	2,458	6,695	847	385	7,707	1,908
Females.															
Surma Valley	9,684	294	22	4,605	5,134	261	681	8,433	886	134	7,037	2,829	66	2,094	7,840
Goalpara	9,525	436	39	3,765	5,823	412	717	8,285	998	148	7,116	2,736	90	2,265	7,645
Brahmaputra Valley, excluding Goalpara	9,917	76	7	8,494	1,435	71	3,867	5,722	411	509	7,973	1,518	170	3,646	6,184

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Distribution by civil condition of 10,000 females at certain age periods in certain districts

Districts	0—10			10—15			15—40			40 and over		
	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Unmarried	Married	Widowed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Animistic Females												
Lushai Hills	9,982	16	2	9,774	204	22	2,879	5,843	1,278	672	4,286	5,042
Naga Hills	9,995	5		9,801	189	10	1,616	7,098	1,286	94	5,324	4,582
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	9,989	10	1	9,531	410	59	1,878	6,451	1,671	182	4,465	5,353
Garo Hills	9,757	238	5	6,868	3,054	78	899	8,614	487	196	7,510	2,294
Hindu Females												
Sylhet	9,661	315	24	4,230	5,489	281	205	7 168	2,627	65	1,816	8,119
Goalpara	9 524	437	39	3,765	5,823	412	280	7,385	2,335	90	2,265	7,645
Kamrup	9 854	136	10	7,610	2,280	110	612	7,770	1,618	135	2 665	7,200
Sibsagar	9,939	56	5	8,882	1,080	38	1,223	7,773	1,004	134	4,366	5,500

Marriage.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VI.

Number of unmarried girls under 12 out of 10,000 females of that age in certain castes.

Sylhet—		Goalpara—	Nowgong—
Brahman	9,064	Rajbansi	Dom (Nadiyal) 9,056
Das	9,337	Kamrup—	Boria 9,037
Dom (Pain)	9,334	Brahman 8,311	Sibsagar—
Jugi	9,078	Ganak 8,800	Chatiya 9,040
Kalbartta	9,319	Kalbartta and Kewat 9,8 3	Brahman 9,8[illegible]
Kayastha	9,366	Koch 9,822	Mazdipur—
Namasudra	9, 38	Kalita 9,739	Mazdipur 9,952
Shaha	9,093	Shaha 9,827	

Das includes also Halwai Das, Sudra and Sudra Das.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VII

Out of 10,000 females of selected castes at two different age periods number who are widows.

Caste, tribe, or race.	5—10.	30—40.
		3
Sylhet—		
Brahman	1 001	3,124
Das*	986	3,456
Dom (Pain)	903	3,470
Jugi	1,264	3,680
Kalbartta	1 180	3,850
Kayastha	918	3,466
Namasudra	972	3,109
Shaha	1 171	3,342
Goalpara—		
Rajbansi	1 103	2,941
Kamrup—		
Brahman	1 739	3,6 3
Ganak	1,667	3,707
Kalbartta and Kewat	486	1,800
Koch	323	1,633
Kalita	259	1 796
Shaha	356	2,002
Nowgong—		
Dom (Nadiyal)	509	2 121
Boria	812	2,263
Sibsagar—		
Brahman	808	2,264
Chatiya	111	783

Das includes also Halwai Das, Sudra and Sudra Das.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VIII.

Proportion of the sexes by civil condition for religions.

Religion.	Number of females per 1,000 males.														
	At all ages.			0—10.			10—15.			15—40.			40 and over		
	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			3	4	5	16
Hindus	958	857	2,483	2,237	997	4,080	2,182	333	7,215	1,222	179	2,133	3,[illegible]	638	3,348
Animists	1,026	895	2,438	2,232	1,008	3,978	2,321	832	3,436	1,232	600	2,283	3[illegible]	829	3,313
Mohammedans	1,[illegible]	679	2,813	2,882	1,[illegible]	3,[illegible]	2,777	481	7,[illegible]	1,324	348	4,[illegible]	3,[illegible]	887	4,409
Christians	1,[illegible]	78[illegible]	3,[illegible]	1,187	903	—	2,[illegible]	8,[illegible]	6,[illegible]	1,[illegible]	4,[illegible]	2,[illegible]	4,[illegible]	1,[illegible]	3,[illegible]

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IX.

Distribution of 10,000 persons of each sex by civil condition and age, for selected castes

UNMARRIED

	Caste.	0—5		5—12		12—15		15—20		20—40		40 and over	
		Males.	Females	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females	Males.	Females.	Males	Females	Males.	Females.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sylhet	Barui	1,975	4,243	3,248	5,239	1,338	206	1,312	29	1,850	158	277	125
	Brahman	1,963	4,237	3,077	5,182	1,165	413	1,367	64	2,089	87	339	17
	Das	1,886	3,969	3,156	5,480	1,039	386	1,319	62	2,361	72	239	31
	Dom (Patni)	2,021	4,116	3,429	5,399	1,091	254	1,310	84	1,973	108	176	39
	Jugi	1,970	4,217	3,325	5,405	1,149	183	1,420	54	1,966	107	170	34
	Kaibartta	2,234	4,875	3,572	4,814	1,019	145	1,197	56	1,846	93	132	17
	Kayastha	1,919	4,166	3,157	5,459	1,040	192	1,364	53	2,169	100	351	30
	Namasudra (Chandal)	2,160	4,262	3,446	5,159	1,137	213	1,311	63	1,815	273	131	30
	Shahi	1,860	3,999	3,161	5,487	1,003	320	1,315	52	2,282	108	379	34
Goalpara	Rajbansi	2,516	4,474	3,433	4,894	1,078	312	1,242	178	1,622	103	109	39
Kamrup	Brahman	2,410	5,026	3,754	4,768	1,150	95	1,313	46	1,195	49	178	16
	Ganak	2,618	4,590	3,930	5,089	1,155	143	1,055	24	1,142	119	100	35
	Kaibartta and Kewat	2,691	3,841	3,763	4,549	1,029	833	1,095	489	1 273	249	149	39
	Koch	2,677	3,740	3,761	4,703	1,044	835	1,054	476	1,394	213	70	33
	Kalita	2,629	3,958	3,743	4,844	1,088	758	1,157	262	1,319	148	64	30
	Shahi	2,829	3,786	3,691	4,585	1,007	824	1,055	528	1,343	239	75	38
Nowgong	Dom (Nadiyal)	2,862	3,561	3,779	4,315	990	875	851	618	1,214	596	304	35
	Boria	2,922	3,790	3,168	4,107	1,106	927	1,047	780	1,607	373	150	23
Sibsagar	Chutiya	2,602	3,427	3,249	4,121	1,214	1,122	1,318	866	1,515	404	101	60
	Brahman	2,554	4,040	3,494	5,443	1,033	380	1,398	71	1,321	60	200	6

Das—Das includes also Halwa Das, Sudra Das and Sudra

Marriage.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IX—*continued.*

MARRIED.

Districts.	Castes.	0—5. Males.	0—5. Females.	5—10. Males.	5—10. Females.	10—15. Males.	10—15. Females.	15—20. Males.	15—20. Females.	20—40. Males.	20—40. Females.	40 and over. Males.	40 and over. Females.
				4		6		7	8	9	10	11	12
Sylhet	Brahmins	Nil	Nil	3	68	48	333	268	2,[illegible]8	5,246	5,20	4,413	767
	Das	1	8	95	380	89	892	189	2,077	5,195	5,846	4,62	823
	Das (Patal)			25	543	37	1,023	228	2,207	5,908	5,474	4,80	81
	Jugi		2	28	652	46	1,[illegible]90	271	2,273	5,784	5,[illegible]90	3,870	773
	Kalbertta	Nil	1	27	625	41	1,[illegible]76	265	2,411	5,907	4,979	3,738	608
	Kayastha	Nil	3	32	593	38	1,009	265	2,205	5,235	5,466	4,440	794
	Nasasudra (Chandal)	Nil	Nil	32	6[illegible]4	40	2,078	249	2,129	5,398	5,323	4,28	896
	Shaha	Nil	8	20	696	15	2,017	222	2,014	5,[illegible]12	5,535	4,631	836
Goalpara	Rajbansi	Nil	Nil	48	777	76	92	393	2,008	5,373	5,354	4,[illegible]80	940
Kamrup	Brahmins	Nil	2	53	1,307	71	1,034	353	1,612	5,049	5,028	4,472	2,023
	Gorak	Nil	9	70	900	90	864	22	658	5,432	5,861	4,227	908
	Kalbertta and Kewat	6	3	30	168	3	327	97	2,174	5,368	5,872	4,338	356
	Koch	1	7	50	63	33	285	178	1,923	5,392	5,832	4,346	2,481
	Kalita	Nil	4	39	240	48	372	81	1,355	5,426	5,734	4,277	1,205
	Shaha	Nil	Nil	33	5	41	33	119	1,243	5,738	7,140	4,269	1,[illegible]2
Nowgong	Dom (Nadiyal)	Nil	Nil	25	48	25	56	133	1,306	5,815	6,474	4,002	2,016
	Doria	Nil	Nil	28	23	56	30	94	1,047	4,836	7,204	4,986	1,696
Sibsagar	Chaliya	Nil	Nil	57	48	18	85	232	806	5,650	7,037	4,034	2,096
	Brahmins	Nil	Nil	28	174	51	1,1[illegible]	340	1,978	5,228	5,292	3,353	1,455

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IX—*concluded*

WIDOWED

Caste tribe or race		0—5.		5—12.		12—15.		15—20.		20—40		40 and over	
		Males	Females.	Males.	Females	Males	Females	Males.	Females	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sylhet	Brahman	*Nil*	2	36	45	9	100	108	369	2,084	3,665	7,763	5,819
	Das	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*	35	3	59	38	294	2,166	3,885	7,793	5,727
	Dom (Patni)	*Nil*	*Nil*	11	48	6	111	56	371	2,371	3,966	7,556	5,504
	Jugi	*Nil*	2	15	45	24	92	48	433	2,626	3,974	7,287	5,454
	Kaibartta	*Nil*	*Nil*	22	37	33	98	33	435	3,642	4,191	6,270	5,239
	Kayastha	*Nil*	2	20	29	13	76	40	282	2,134	3,658	7,793	5,953
	Namasudra	*Nil*	1	24	59	*Nil*	85	60	357	2,849	3,799	7,067	5,699
	Shahi	*Nil*	2	52	50	13	56	13	296	2,173	3,230	7,749	6,366
Goalpara	Rajbansi	*Nil*	*Nil*	34	82	11	120	68	424	3,030	3,591	6,857	5,783
Kamrup	Brahman	*Nil*	*Nil*	12	100	12	119	84	435	2,126	3,622	7,766	5,724
	Ganak	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*	80	*Nil*	109	144	378	2,230	3,817	7,626	5,616
	Kaibartta and Kewat	*Nil*	5	10	23	32	21	95	168	2,653	2,798	7,210	6,985
	Koch	*Nil*	1	17	12	11	28	136	125	2,946	2,814	6,890	7,020
	Kalita	*Nil*	*Nil*	7	16	21	22	114	82	2,683	2,841	7,175	7,039
	Shahi	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*	48	31	24	126	109	2,673	2,902	7,170	6,917
Nowgong	Dom	*Nil*	*Nil*	17	11	185	11	286	194	3,872	3,171	5,640	6,613
	Boria	*Nil*	*Nil*	26	11	*Nil*	11	106	65	5,435	3,222	4,433	6,691
Sibsagar	Chutiya	*Nil*	*Nil*	18	7	18	4	134	67	3,122	1,999	6,708	7,923
	Brahman	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*	28	27	165	398	3,223	3,457	6,584	6,118

SUBSIDIARY TABLE X.

Proportion of wives to husbands for religious and natural divisions.

Natural divisions.	Number of married females per 1,000 married males.				
	All religions.	Hindus.	Mahomedans.	Animists.	Christians.
		3	4	5	6
Surma Valley — —	970	1,013	1,030	—	—
Brahmaputra Valley — —	948	937	—	1,032	—
Hill districts — —	933	—	—	1,040	—
Manipur — —	1,018	1,009	—	1,016	—
Province — —	983	976	1,01	1,018	1,033

Excluding Lushkipur and Sibsagar

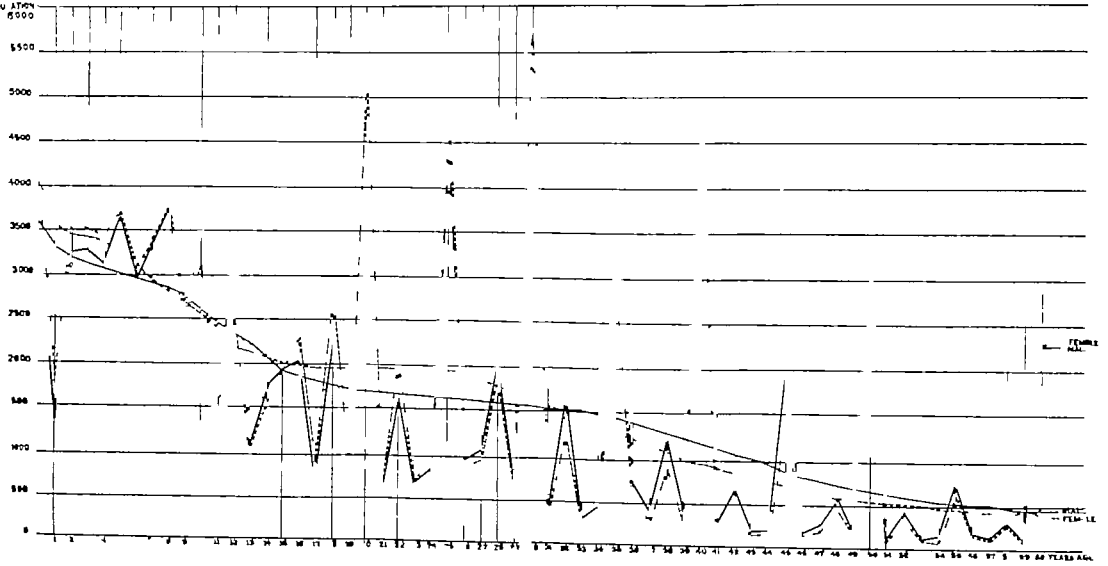
SUBSIDIARY TABLE XI.

Distribution by civil condition of 10,000 of each sex for natural divisions.

Natural divisions.	Civil condition of 10,000 males.														
	At all ages.			0—10.			10—15.			15—40.			40 and over.		
	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		12	13	14	15	16
Surma Valley — —	3,870	5,741	379	18	9,969	3	116	9,774	10	5,771	3,91	318	8,163	377	1,136
Brahmaputra Valley — —	4,000	5,416	583	32	9,963		37	9,963		6,044	3,368	588	7,811	233	1,956
Hill districts — —	4,087	5,398	535	11	9,981		108	9,753	12	6,188	3,170	642	8,207	253	1,540
Manipur — —	4,140	5,439	421	16	9,968	4	19	9,974	7	6,006	3,681	313	8,318	83	1,673
Total Province — —	3,985	5,515	479	19	9,968	3	106	9,730	14	5,873	3,539	473	8,168	347	1,485

Natural divisions.	Civil condition of 10,000 females.														
	At all ages.			0—10.			10—15.			15—40.			40 and over.		
	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		12	13	14	15	16
Surma Valley — —	4,138	5,754	108	178	9,815	17	4,394	5,590	16	7,388	317	295	6,384	73	2,548
Brahmaputra Valley — —	4,088	5,533	379	135	9,857	18	3,958	5,944	98	7,704	277	1,019	5,738	39	4,112
Hill districts — —	4,037	5,874	389	78	9,922	5	147	8,836	17	7,847	710	1,443	5,038	89	4,872
Manipur — —	4,013	5,449	538	63	9,888		208	9,345	19	7,163	586	951	5,459	31	4,807
Total Province — —	4,118	5,707	175	132	9,890	13	3,873	6,918	40	7,087	783	1,149	5,391	116	4,183

Diagram showing, out of one hundred thousand persons of both sexes, the number living at each year up to 60 (*a*) as actually returned and (*b*) after smoothing by Bloxham s method. The ages are printed at the foot the number of persons alive at each year at the side of the diagram — = males ——— = females.



CHAPTER VII

AGE

Age.

Inaccuracy of the return

137. Before entering upon any discussion of the age returns of the people, it is necessary to point out that the unadjusted figures have but the slightest connection with actual facts Even in Europe many illiterate persons do not know the exact number of years which they have lived, but the estimate offered is at any rate not grossly incorrect In Assam, however, we are dealing with people, a large proportion of whom are entirely devoid of the arithmetical sense They see nothing absurd in a son returning himself as the same age as his mother, and in many cases do not even know within what periods youth, maturity, and old age must fall, a wrinkled whitehaired old hag declaring herself, in perfect good faith, to be 20 years old The enumerators were, of course, allowed to exercise their own judgment and, wherever possible, to correct obvious errors, but, unfortunately, they not unfrequently did not know their own ages, and so had no standard by which to measure the inaccuracy of the replies given to them There is, however, as pointed out by Mr Gait, no marked tendency either to under or over estimation, and, as in a large number of cases the mistakes neutralise one another, the net result would not be very wrong, were it not for the fact that there is a natural predisposition to mention a round number when the exact figure is not known, and that there exists a distinct preference for certain particular years

Character of mistakes made

138 The tendency to error can be most clearly seen in Subsidiary Table I—Age distribution of 100,000 persons of each sex by annual periods The first mistake is in connection with children aged 1, but less than 2 The enumerators were warned that the expression 'infant' should only be applied to babies less than twelve months old, but it seems impossible to overcome the tendency to use this word for every child that still depends upon its mother for nourishment, and, as babies in Assam are generally nursed for more than twelve months, the first year of life has profited largely at the expense of the second The period 0—1 also includes all babies born in the month or five weeks during which the preliminary enumeration was going on, but I fear that very seldom, if ever, were corrections made for infants who celebrated their first birthdays in this period One and less than 2 is, however, an age which is peculiarly hated of the enumerator, and it seems that, if a baby was no longer at its mother's breast, it was assumed to be 2, 3, or even 4 In a normal population it is obvious that the number of persons alive at each successive age period must steadily decline, as a certain proportion of children in each year of life die before they see another birthday, yet we find that out of 200,000 people, there are only 3,186, aged 1, but less than 2, though there are over 6,000 living at each successive year till 9 is reached, while the number of children aged 8 is larger than the number at any of the preceding years, except 0—1 It is possible that a very marked fluctuation in the birth-rate might produce an actual excess of children at a later age, but it is obvious that this cause could only account for a very slight excess in numbers, and, as a matter of fact, the recorded birth-rate in 1899 and 1900 was higher than at any other period of the decade

139 In addition to this special inaccuracy with regard to the first completed year of life, there are other flagrant errors in the age returns of both sexes Not only do we find a marked tendency to lump on fives and tens, which becomes more pronounced as we reach old age, of which I quote a few examples in the margin, but each sex displays a certain preference for different ages Boys affect 10 and 12, girls 16, 18, 20, 22, and 25 The effect of the difference of fashion between the sexes is to show that between 10 and 15 the mortality is higher amongst girls than boys, which is probably true, though not to the extent indicated by the figures, but that between 15 and 25 men die more rapidly than women, which is almost certainly incorrect.

Out of 100 000 persons of each sex number aged—

	Males	Females
19	559	793
20	3 491	5,225
21	537	732
34	452	397
35	3,742	2,835
36	652	473
59	84	69
60	2,355	2,203
61	53	66

Age.

140 In Table II will be found the distribution by age of 10 000 persons of either sex at each of the last three enumerations There is a close relation between the proportion of the sexes alive at each age period at each census but the figures abstracted in the margin show a steady diminution in the number of young children and an increase in the proportion of those in middle age At first sight, one might be tempted to imagine that this is due to the large number of adult immigrants who enter the province but the tables for Animistic tribes, who are all indigenous and those for Muhammadans who are mainly so negative this supposition. Assuming that the age figures are equally incorrect at each census, this decrease in the proportion of children must be due either to a decrease in the death rate which would leave a larger number of adult persons alive, or to a decrease in the number of children born.* It is difficult to believe that there has been any improvement in the expectation of life in the province as a whole and the figures in Subsidiary Table III lend strong support to the theory that a succession of unhealthy seasons has not only killed off the population, but has diminished their reproductive powers

Decrease in proportion of children.

	1901.	1891.	1881.
	Males.		
0—4	1,000	1,000	1,000
10—20	900	908	927
20—30	877	880	908
30—40	840	871	900

	Out of 10,000 persons under 10 years of age 0—4.	
Animistic—	Males.	Females.
1891	1,000	1,000
1901	1,110	1,100
Muhammadan—		
1881	1,301	1,270
1891	1,270	1,230
1901	1,217	1,200

141 In Nowgong, there are now 319 children under 10 to every thousand people as compared with 329 ten years ago and in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills 294, as compared with 306; that is to say in these two districts the proportion of adults has increased We are practically certain that this increase is not due either to a decline in the death-rate or to immigration, and the most plausible explanation is that it is the result of a decrease in the fertility of people who have been exposed to exceptionally unfavourable conditions. That there is a close connection between a high mortality and a fall in the birth rate is to be seen from the Provincial vital returns. The year 1897 was very unhealthy and in 1898 the recorded birth rate fell to 29 4 per mille, as compared with 32·6 per mille i the preceding and 35 4 per mille in the following year In Sylhet too where public health has been bad the proportion of children has fallen from 315 to 304, in all probability owing to a decrease in the number born.

Fertility of different districts, Table III.

In Goalpara the proportion has risen from 320 to 331 and it seems probable on other grounds that in this district both causes may have been at work a rise in the birth rate being accompanied by a decline in the death-rate. The figures for Kamrup seem at first sight strange, as the proportion of children (336) is higher than in any part of the province at either of the last two enumerations. The death-rate must have been high, and on *a priori* grounds I should have expected this phenomenon to be combined, as in Nowgong, with a decline in the birth-rate; and the increase of the youthful element must I think, be due to the emigration of adults to work on the tea gardens of Upper Assam The figures for the great tea districts hardly repay examination, as it is impossible to ascertain the exact effect of immigration, and we can pass on at once to the hill tracts. Amongst the Garos as is only natural in a growing population the proportion of children has increased, but amongst the Nagas the ratio is extraordinarily low I have already referred to the sterility of the Naga in Chapter II of the Report, and this phenomenon must apparently be accepted as a fact though its causes are obscure. In the Lushai Hills the proportion of children (283 per mille) is very small. This is possibly due to a lower death rate, which would produce a greater preponderance of adults than in the plains but as amongst the Lushais the women considerably exceed the men in numbers one would expect to find a large juvenile population. It is true that this tribe decline to allow an infant to enjoy the life it has obtained at the expense of its mother and if the latter dies bury her baby with her but the mortality from child birth amongst hill people is not likely to be sufficiently high to seriously prejudice the rising generation.

142. Subsidiary Table IV shows the age distribution of the three main religions. Amongst Hindus, the proportion below 10 is lower and that between 20 and 40 higher than amongst Animists and Muhammadans; but this is what we should expect, as the majority of immigrants are both Hindus and adult. I doubt however whether sufficient reliance can be placed upon the figures to enable us to draw conclusions of any value The proportion of children under 5 is 1 600 for Muhammadans and 1 723 for Animistic tribes and

Age distribution of the main religions.

* It might also be due to an increase in the death-rate amongst the infant but not amongst the adult population. This does not, however seem very plausible explanation.

Age

this suggests that the Animist is either more prolific or shorter lived than the Muhammadan, but, if we take the proportion under 10, we find the Muhammadan with 3,374 children, and the Animist with 3,254, so that the two sets of figures give contradictory results The Muhammadan figures for 5—10 must obviously be very wrong, as it is impossible that the proportion of children of that age should so largely outnumber the proportion under 5 At both of the last enumerations, the proportion of Animistic males has been less than that of Muhammadans between 15 and 30, but higher at succeeding ages I can suggest no explanation of this fact, if it be a fact, which I am much inclined to doubt, as I do not think that the volume of Muhammadan immigration is sufficiently large to have any appreciable effect upon the figures, and, though it is possible that the Animistic races may be shorter lived than the Musulman, it does not seem likely that the death-rate would be higher in adolescence and the prime of life, and lower after 30

143 The figures in the margin show the fertility of the followers of the three main religions, and lend considerable support to the view that if the reproductive powers of a woman are brought into play at too early an age, they soon succumb to the strain put upon them The difference between Hindus and the Animistic tribes is very marked In 1891, 1,000 Hindu wives had 223 children less than an equal number of Animistic married women, and at the last census the deficiency was as much as 366, *i e*, broadly speaking, the Animistic wife has six children where her Hindu sister has only five

Fertility of religions and castes.

	Number of children under 10 to every 1,000 married women between 15 and 40	
	1901	1891.
Hindus ...	1,791	1 924
Muhammadans ...	2,088	2,117
Animistic ...	2,157	2,147

The figures* for the various castes are not very suggestive The Koch has the largest number of children under 12 (2,447), and is followed by the Kalita (2,442), next come the Brahman (2,316), the Rajbansi (2,299), and the Das† (2,280), all three of them being castes that practice infant marriage The Chutiya (2,288) is very low on the list, but it must be borne in mind that many of the mothers of the three preceding castes are not wives, but widows, and if we take the proportion of children to women between 15 and 40, the Chutiya with 1,770 children is considerably in advance of the Das with 1,589 The proportion is lowest amongst the Kayastha (1,480 children to 1,000 women between 15 and 40), and the Namasudra (1,442) The women of the last-named caste work in the fields, and it is possible that their mode of life may have a prejudicial effect upon their reproductive powers

Birth and death rates

144 It would be interesting if we could ascertain the actual birth and death-rate in this province, and in 1891, Mr Gait made an attempt to do so His estimate, however, makes the following assumptions

First, it assumes that the data furnished by the proclaimed çlans are reliable secondly, that these data are applicable to Assam, *i e*, that the rate of juvenile mortality in the two provinces‡ is approximately the same, and thirdly, that the calculation of boys under ten years of age is correct Fourthly, and lastly, it assumes that the annual rate of increase has been uniform in the period under consideration It may be said that a birth-rate based on so many assumptions is not worth much, and I admit that it is only a rough approximation

On the present occasion we can feel fairly confident that the second and fourth assumptions would not be correct, and as the age statistics will be examined by a professional actuary, I do not propose to anticipate the result of his researches by calculating birth and death-rates upon which we could place little or no reliance

I have, however, attempted in a previous chapter to frame estimates of the natural growth or decline of the population in the various districts of the province, and from these estimates it is possible to ascertain the relation borne by the average birth-rate to the average death-rate during the last ten years In England, between 1881 and 1891, the average birth-rate was 34 per mille, the average death-rate 20 so that the birth-rate exceeded the death-rate by 14 per mille In the province, as a whole, the birth-rate has exceeded the death-rate by only 1 per mille, the excess of births being most pronounced in Lakhimpur, where there is a surplus of 15, and Sibsagar, where there is a surplus of 8 In Kamrup and Darrang the death-rate exceeds the birth-rate by 8 per mille, and in Nowgong by as much as 37.

* These figures have been compiled from Table XIV-A Volume II

† Das also includes Halwa Das, Suara Das and Sudra

‡ *i e*, Assam and the North West Provinces

Age. Mr Gait's calculations resulted in a birth-rate for the province, excluding gardens of about 49 per mille, and, assuming that this rate holds good for Upper Assam, the death rate amongst the Assamese must have been 34 per mille in Lakhimpur and 41 per mille in Sibsagar I have already shown that the age returns do not suggest any decrease in the birth-rate in Kamrup but, even if we suppose that in this district and Darrang it fell to 45 per mille, the death rate in this part of the province must have been as high as 53. It is probable that in Nowgong the reproductive powers of the people were affected by the abnormal unhealthiness of the decade, but I should doubt whether the birth-rate would fall below 35 per mille, and, if this is so the average annual death rate over the whole district for ten years must have been no less than 72 per mille.*

The productive ages.

145 For men I have assumed that the productive age lies between 15 and 55, while for women for whom the reproduction of the species is a more important duty than the production of wealth, 15—40 seems to be the most important period. From the statement in the margin it appears that the proportion of both sexes in these periods is considerably higher than that in Assam in 1891 or that in Bengal at the last census. The increase in the proportion of potential mothers is particularly marked and at first sight it seems strange that it should be combined with a decrease in fertility The marriage tables, however show that the proportion of married women between 15 and 40 has decreased during the last ten years, and, as I have already pointed out there have been causes at work which have been prejudicial to the natural growth of the people.

Out of every 1,000 in the population, number of—	Males between 15 and 55.	Females between 15 and 40.
Assam, 1901	268	251
Assam, 1891	250	240
Bengal, 1901	250	241

The mean age of the population.

146. The mean age of the population is 23 years 2 months, that for males being 23 years 7 months, and that for females 11 months less These figures are practically the same as those worked out by Mr Gait in 1891 The mean age of a population depends upon the combined effect of the birth-rate and death-rate. Where the birth-rate is low the mean age will as a rule be high as the proportion of young persons to the total population is small and it will be highest when a low birth-rate and death-rate are combined. In Assam, however we have an exactly opposite set of conditions, *i.e.* a high birth rate combined with a high death rate. The result of this is that the proportion of young people is large, and the number of those who attain to old age is small, so that the mean age of the population must of necessity be low

Mean age by religions.

147 The figures in the margin show the mean ages of the three main religions. The high mean age of Hindus is partly due to the deficiency of children to which I have already referred and partly to the influx of adult immigrants. In a previous paragraph I have pointed out the difficulty of deciding whether the Muhammadan or the Animist is the more prolific so the figures for males do not justify us in looking upon the hill man as a better life than his Moslem brother; but it is quite clear that the Animistic woman is better off than others of her sex.

	Males. Years.	Males. Months.	Females. Years.	Females. Months.
Hindus	24	1	22	8
Muhammadans	22	8	22	11
Animists	22		22	11

Explanation of the diagram.

148 The diagram annexed to the Chapter shows the line of life for 100,000 villagers of either sex, sorted in annual periods, up to 60 (*a*) as the ages were returned in the schedules, and (*b*) after they had been smoothed by Bloxham's method. The figures actually recorded by the enumerators are obviously grossly incorrect, and it is this inaccuracy in the returns which renders their examination a somewhat thankless task. The chief value of the age tables is to throw some light on the age constitution of the people, and to enable us to calculate the birth and death-rates prevailing in the province. The unadjusted figures are, however so misleading that it is doubtful whether it serves any useful object to attempt to express in figures, what we know on other grounds to be true, that the birth and death-rate are alike high.

Comparison with Bengal and England.

149 Subsidiary Table V compares the age distribution of Assam with Bengal and England. Taking Bengal first, it appears that the proportion of children below 10 is about the same in both provinces. Between 20 and 40, the balance is in favour of Assam, owing to the large

* These suggested death rates may be thought to be excessive, but it must be borne in mind that the recorded death rate for the whole province in 1897 was 37·6 per mille and the actual death was probably considerably in excess of this.

number of immigrants of these ages, but over 40 the proportion falls rapidly, showing, what no doubt is true, that the expectation of life is not so high in this province as in Bengal When comparing our figures with those for England, we are at once struck by the large preponderance of children under 10 in Assam, coupled with a deficiency both of boys and girls between 10 and 20 The proportion of persons alive between 20 and 40 is higher in Assam than in England, partly because this age period has in this province gained at the expense of the one preceding it, and partly because Assam gains, and England loses, by the migration of persons in the prime of life After 40, the proportion alive falls off rapidly in India

Age.

Age.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Unadjusted age return of 100,000 persons of each sex

Age.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Age.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	1		3	4
Below 1 year	7 616	3,605	4,011	Brought forward	195,727	97,815	97 912
1	3,186	1,347	1 839				
2	6,862	3,236	3,626				
3	6,809	3,256	3,553				
4	6,521	3,091	3,430				
5	7,415	3 674	3,741	61	119	53	66
6	6,061	2,976	3,085	62	339	163	176
7	6,673	3,311	3,362	63	64	32	32
8	7,576	3,837	3,739	64	89	53	36
9	4 712	2 144	2,568	65	499	270	229
10	7,019	3,915	3,104	66	51	27	24
11	2,666	1,346	1,310	67	113	62	51
12	5,979	3,475	2,504	68	140	66	74
13	2,119	1 104	1 015	69	81	38	43
14	3,384	1 787	1,597	70	1,065	542	523
15	3,888	1 975	1 913	71	42	24	18
16	4,344	2,021	2,323	72	115	64	51
17	1,659	703	956	73	16	7	9
18	5,218	2,341	2 877	74	20	10	1
19	1,352	559	793	75	207	109	98
20	8,716	3,491	5,225	76	29	17	12
21	1,269	537	732	77	30	20	10
22	3,627	1,623	2,004	78	64	39	25
23	1,272	632	640	79	27	16	11
24	1 798	835	963	80	787	370	417
25	9,244	4,428	4 816	81	15	5	10
26	1 805	936	869	82	24	12	12
27	1 973	1,037	936	83	3	2	3
28	3,913	2,021	1,892	84	15	5	1
29	1,269	669	600	85	66	37	29
30	11,354	5,493	5,861	86	6	2	4
31	629	341	288	87	9	5	4
32	2,893	1 653	1,240	88	12	4	8
33	571	309	262	89	9	9	
34	849	452	397	90	126	67	59
35	6,577	3 742	2,835	91	6	5	1
36	1 125	652	473	92	10	7	3
37	724	399	325	93			
38	2,107	1 199	908	94	2	1	1
39	719	415	304	95	14	9	5
40	9,476	4,992	4,484	96	3	3	
41	409	232	177	97	2	1	1
42	1 176	698	478	98	3	1	2
43	321	163	158	99	5	2	3
44	348	185	163	100	32	16	16
45	3,460	2,048	1,412	101			
46	266	139	127	102	1		1
47	437	263	174	103	1	1	
48	1,031	592	439	104			
49	314	164	150	105			
50	6,435	3,360	3,075	106	1	1	
51	202	111	91	107	1	1	
52	742	418	324	108			
53	189	94	95	109			
54	230	138	92	110	4	3	1
55	1,333	745	588	111			
56	304	177	127	112	1	1	
57	225	120	105	120	2	2	
58	481	270	211	125	1	1	
59	177	84	93				
60	4,548	2,255	2,293				
Carried over	195,727	97,815	97,912	Total	200,000	100,000	100,000

AGES OF THE PEOPLE

Age.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Age distribution of 10,000 of each sex

Age.	1901		1891 *		1881.*	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males.	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0—1	348	373	339	368	263	299
1—2	174	191	182	203	281	306
2—3	301	337	324	366	345	387
3—4	304	339	339	383	366	416
4—5	303	329	332	364	398	418
0—5	1,430	1,569	1,516	1,684	1,653	1,826
5—10	1,516	1,564	1,507	1,564	1,485	1,387
10—15	1,128	965	1,140	969	1,053	890
15—20	751	881	747	851	734	795
20—25	758	977	757	928	764	847
25—30	957	905	863	928	929	1,043
30—35	896	833	865	835	827	762
35—40	708	527	671	506	648	562
40—45	621	547	623	557	535	489
45—50	337	203	324	242	388	334
50—55	371	351	389	352	336	238
55—60	143	121	136	109	214	195
60 and over	384	407	442	475	434	532

* Manipur has been excluded from the calculations, as the papers in 1891 were destroyed in the rising, and figures in the form given above are not available for 1881

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Proportion of children under 10 per 1,000 of total population

Districts	Per mille	
	1901	1891
1	2	3
Cachar Plains	290	305
Sylhet	304	315
Goalpara	331	3 0
Kamrup	336	321
Darrang	292	301
Nowgong	313	329
Sibsagar	291	308
Lakhimpur	279	295
Lushai Hills	283	
North Cachar	179	318
Naga Hills	269	293
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	294	305
Garo Hills	315	323
Manipur	303	

Age.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Age distribution of 10,000 of each sex by religion.

Age.	Hindus.		Mahammadans.		Animists.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
		3	4	5	6	7
0—1	335	363	383	418	344	343
1—2	158	176	169	188	237	239
2—3	271	309	318	356	377	393
3—4	274	313	314	360	39	391
4—5	270	300	333	363	366	366
0—5	1 308	1,461	1,517	1,685	1 7 5	1 732
5—10	1,401	1,474	1 731	1 824	1 588	1,476
10—15	1,090	939	1,164	1,030	1,047	948
15—20	754	845	782	989	687	834
20—25	793	1,000	731	975	673	903
25—30	1,027	1 071	9 0	909	782	881
30—35	953	882	805	726	840	835
35—40	765	565	614	423	659	561
40—45	641	560	54	470	679	617
45—50	357	282	292	210	341	277
50—55	387	372	319	308	401	353
55—60	158	137	108	79	145	133
60 and over	566	412	389	372	443	450

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Age distribution of 10,000 persons in Assam, Bengal and England.

Age.	Assam, 1901		Bengal, 89		England, 1891.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
		3	4	5	6	7
0—1	2,946	3,132	2,941	2 964	2,463	2,333
10—20	1 879	1 846	2,035	1,807	2 174	2,087
20—30	1 7 5	1,972	,543	1 723	1 693	1 740
30—4	1,604	1,360	1,456	1,386	1,3 5	1,324
40—50	958	810	993	930	1,003	1,018
50—60	5 4	472	563	580	687	723
60 and over	384	408	469	610	675	781
Total	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

CHAPTER VIII

LANGUAGE

Language

150 There is probably no country in the world which affords a richer field for the philologist than Assam, for, though the population barely exceeds six millions, no less than one hundred and sixty-seven different languages were returned at the last census I do not, however, propose to discuss Table X, which deals with these matters, at any great length, as in the report for 1891 will be found an admirable description of the languages of the province, to which I have nothing that I can add from my own personal experience Even were I able to make some contribution to this store-house of knowledge, the fact that a linguistic survey has been taken in hand by Dr Grierson renders the insertion of a philological treatise in a census report a matter of questionable utility

Value of the return of languages

151 As pointed out by Mr Maclagan in the Punjab Census Report for 1891, "the main use of our language figures is to show, and this very imperfectly, the spread or decrease of the various vernaculars in use" and of the imperfection of this demonstration Assam affords abundant instances The main languages of the province are Bengali, Assamese, and a large number of indigenous forms of speech belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family The growth of Bengali is obscured by the fact that this language is returned, whether rightly or wrongly, by a large proportion of the foreign population, and but little reliance can be placed on the returns for Assamese and the Tibeto-Burman family Nearly all the aboriginal tribes who live in the plains of the Brahmaputra Valley speak Assamese in addition to their own tribal lingo, and it is to some extent a matter of chance which of the two is entered in the schedule This point will, however, be dealt with at greater length in the paragraph on the Bodo group

The returns for foreign languages must of necessity be very incomplete The enumerator has but the vaguest idea of the languages spoken in India, and would prefer to enter everything as Bengali, Deshwali, or, if he is dealing with a native of Nepal, Naipali, and the person enumerated is almost equally ignorant The result is that this section of the table throws but little light either upon the extent to which a language is in use, or upon the number of persons in Assam belonging to the tribe or caste by which it is usually employed, and I therefore propose to confine myself to a very brief review first of the indigenous, and then of the foreign languages returned at the census I am indebted to Dr Grierson, who has kindly placed some of his notes at my disposal, for the little that I am able to say about the languages of Assam

Bengali and Assamese

152 The two main indigenous languages of the province are Bengali, which is spoken by 48 per cent of the population, and Assamese, which has been returned by 22 per cent Bengali is the common vernacular of the Surma Valley, where it is spoken by 61 per cent of the inhabitants of the Cachar plains, and 92 per cent of those in Sylhet In Goalpara, too, it is the language of the people, and has been returned by 69 per cent of the persons censused there, but in the remaining five districts of the Brahmaputra Valley its place is taken by Assamese It is true that it has been returned by 19 per cent of the inhabitants of Darrang and Sibsagar, and 21 per cent of those of Lakhimpur, but it is doubtful whether Bengali in this case means anything more than "a foreign language," which is just as likely to have belonged to the Munda or Dravidian stock as to the Indo-European family, of which Bengali is a member The language was entered against 2,948,183 people, nearly nine-tenths of whom were censused in the Surma Valley and Goalpara The increase during the decade was 206,236, and is due partly to natural growth and partly to immigration

Assamese is the speech of 1,349,784 people, nearly 99 per cent of whom were found in the five upper districts of the Assam Valley It is spoken by 83 per cent of the population of Kamrup, 66 per cent of that of Nowgong, and 59 per cent of that of Sibsagar In Darrang, it is used by only a moiety of the population, and in Lakhimpur it is the exception rather than the rule to talk Assamese, rather more than half of the persons censused there using languages foreign to the province During the last ten years, the number of those returning this vernacular has diminished by 4 5

language. per cent which is considerably less than the decrease which has occurred amongst the Assamese people and it is probable that coolies who in Upper Assam frequently adopt this tongue as their customary form of speech have returned it in the census schedules. I endeavoured in the abstracting office to trace the extent to which this practice is in vogue, but I unfortunately had to reject the figures when compiled, as I found them to be unreliable.

The relation between Bengali and Assamese was well described in the report for 1881 an extract from which was reproduced on page 157 of the last census report and need not therefore be reprinted here. Incidentally however I may remark that Hajong which is used by 1 102 persons is a dialect of Bengali, and is not a member of the Bodo family as was thought in 1891

The Bodo group.

153. The main languages of the Bodo group are Bodo or plains Kachari, Dimasa, or Hills Kachari Garo Rabha Lalung and Tipura Bodo is principally spoken in Goalpara, Kamrup and Darrang, where it is the mother tongue of the tribe of that name who are however generally known as Mech in Goalpara and Kachari in Assam Proper Cachar is the home of Dimasa, the Garo Hills of Garo Goalpara of Rabha and Nowgong of Lalung, while the great majority of those who speak Tipura are emigrants from the hills of that name to Sylhet There seem to be good reasons for supposing that Bodo in one shape or another was originally the prevailing form of speech in the Brahmaputra Valley the Garo and North Cachar Hill the Cachar plains and Hill Tipperah; but, like all primitive tongues, it has a tendency to die out when brought into competition with a language of a higher type.

Subsidiary Table III shows the number of persons speaking each form of language at the last two enumerations, and the proportion which they bear to the total number of the tribe; the latter set of figures being required if we are to gain a clear idea of the process of growth or decay as in some cases it is not so much the language as the people themselves who are disappearing Garo is the one vernacular which may be described as being in a thoroughly healthy condition as not only is it used by the whole of the Garo tribe, but they have succeeded in imposing it upon a certain proportion of their neighbours. Bodo and Dimasa are spoken by 76 per cent. of the Kachari as compared with 85 per cent. in 1891, and Lalung has suffered a serious relapse the percentage being only 46 as compared with 77 ten years ago In this case, however I am inclined to think that it is the people as much as the language which has died out The mortality amongst the Lalungs in the south of the Nowgong district has been terrible, and it is this section of the tribe who were the great Lalung speakers in 1891 as according to Mr Gait those who lived north of the Kalang had forgotten their own special language.

The causes of this decay of the primitive forms of speech are so obvious as hardly to require mention The development of the province the growth of tea gardens on which considerable numbers of Kacharis are employed the improvement of the means of communication and the spread of education have all combined to produce a state of affairs, in which the tribesman finds it necessary to know some language which will be intelligible to people living outside his own village; and each successive census will no doubt show a decreasing proportion of those tribal languages, at any rate in the plains portion of the province. At the same time, it must not be supposed that Kacharis or Mikirs have of necessity forgotten their *mother tongue, because they have not returned it in the schedules. The great* majority of these tribes are bi-lingual, and the enumerator is often uncertain whether he should enter Assamese or Bodo so that the variations disclosed by the census tables do not of necessity represent an actual variation in the number of Bodo speakers A good illustration of this will be found in the case of Rabha. In 1881 it was returned by 56 499 people, in 1891 by 507 but at the last census the figures again rose to 20 243, and it is perfectly obvious that the startling variations disclosed have no connection with ever with actual facts. Again the Chutia language, which was declared by Mr Gait to be dead has been returned by 2,364 people, as compared with 7 in 1891 and 78 people have actually reported that they speak Moran, though that language had not a single adherent at either of the two preceding enumerations

An excellent account of the Bodo languages will be found on pages 159 to 162 of the last census report to which I have very little to add. Dr Grierson describes Bodo or plains Kachari as being a fairly rich language, which is remarkable for the great ease with which roots can be compounded together to express a compound idea. Lalung forms a link between Bodo and Dimasa or Hill Kachari. In 1891 Bodo and Dimasa were shown under the same head (Kachari) but Dr Grierson informs me that they have less in common than French and Spanish though they both no doubt had

Language

a common ancestor Chutia is the language of the old Chutiya* kingdom, which was overthrown by the Ahoms at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and appears to have preserved the oldest characteristics, and to most nearly approach the original form of speech from which the Bodo group was derived , it and Kachari represent the two extremes, the least developed and the most developed of the group It is spoken by the priestly caste of the Chutiya tribe, who have not yet attorned to Hinduism, and still maintain their old traditions , but the main body of the people have, like the Koches and Ahoms, to all intents and purposes become a Hindu caste A 'Grammar of the Chutia Language' has been published by Mr W B Brown, C S

Districts in which Bodo languages are spoken

154 The North-Eastern group includes Aka and Mishmi, Dafla, Miri, and Abor Aka and Mishmi are spoken by tribes who live beyond the Inner Line, and the persons returned under this head are temporary visitors to the plains in the cold weather Of these two languages, practically nothing is known The Akas are a small but very independent tribe, with no taste for philological investigations When I was in charge of the Darrang district, I endeavoured to induce the chief, who knew a little Assamese, to translate the parable of the prodigal son into Aka, but my attempts met with no success, and as far as I am aware there are no reliable specimens extant of this form of speech Three vocabularies of the language have been compiled,—one by Robinson, one by Hesselmeyer, and one by Mr J. D Anderson in 1896 The last two differ entirely from the first, and from them it appears that Aka, in all probability, belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family, though it differs widely from all the other members Abor and Miri are practically identical, and Dafla is very closely akin to them The Daflas live in the hills to the north-east of Darrang, and the Abors to the north of Sadiya, so that the number of persons returning these languages is naturally not large The Miris, however, have migrated in large numbers to the plains, and Miri is spoken by no less than 40,472 persons, the great majority of whom were censused in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur The use of the tribal form of speech seems, however, to be declining, the proportion of Miri-speaking Miris being only 86 6 per cent., as compared with 94 9 ten years ago

The North Eastern group

155 We next come to the Naga group, under which no less than eighteen languages have been returned, which are spoken by the remarkably small aggregate of 247,772 persons, 151,924 of whom were returned under the two heads, Mikir and Naga unspecified, so that 95,848 people divide sixteen languages between them The Mikirs live in the hills that bear their name in Nowgong and Sibsagar, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and Kamrup, and have been very faithful to their own form of speech, 94 per cent of the tribe returning it as the language ordinarily used, as compared with 95 per cent in 1891

The Naga group

Although such a large number of languages has been recorded, the return of Naga dialects is, I regret to say, not complete, and the persons who in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur probably spoke Mutonia and Namsangia have been shown under Naga, pure and simple In Manipur, also, the generic term has been preferred, and people have been returned as speaking Naga, instead of the local dialects, such as Khoirao, Kwoireng, Khongoe, Phadang, *et hoc genus omne* I cannot, however, feel that this fact reflects any discredit upon the census staff In this part of the country, the enumerators were, as a rule, Gurkhas or Manipuris, who were very slightly, if at all, acquainted with these numerous subdivisions of the Naga group, and had a natural tendency to lump all hillmen together under the generic name, and they rather, in my opinion, deserve commendation, for having succeeded in recording as many as sixteen different kinds of Naga, than blame for having overlooked distinctions of which few, if any, people in the district at the time of the census had heard † This abnormal growth of languages is due to the unsociable character of the tribes by whom they are used The pacification of the Naga Hills is of comparatively recent date, and before the introduction of the dominant power there was but little intercourse even between neighbouring villages Monosyllabic languages such as those of the Naga group grow apart from one another rapidly when there is neither a literature nor social intercourse to bind them together, and the consequence is that villagers who live within sight of one another cannot converse, except in a foreign language common to both, and persons who have moved even a short distance from the parent village have developed a perfectly distinct form of speech in the course of two or three generations Mikir and Kachcha Naga are links between Bodo and the typical forms of the Naga language, which fall into three groups,—Western, Central, and Eastern

* I follow the spelling of the last Census Report Dr Grierson describes Chutia as the language of the Chutiya tribe and Chutiya as a dialect of Miri

anguage.

156. The Western group includes Angami, Kezhama, Sema and Rengma, and the most characteristic feature which distinguishes them from the Central sub-group is that the negative particle follows the word it governs, instead of preceding it 40 850 persons were returned under this group the great majority of whom speak Angami.

The Western group.

157 The central sub-group includes Ao —with its two dialects Chungli and Mongsen —*Lhota and Yachumi 45 132 persons were entered* under these languages the majority speaking one or other of the Ao dialects Yachumi is spoken beyond our frontier and only 35 persons were shown in the census schedules as using this language.

The Central group.

158 The Naga languages belonging to the Eastern sub-group are used by the tribes living in the hills which are bounded on the west by the Aos, on the south by the Patkoi, and on the east by the Kachin country The inhabitants of this tract are split up into small tribes speaking dialects which have a considerable affinity to one another though members of one tribe cannot understand or make themselves understood by their neighbours Only 1,921 persons were returned under this group the majority being shown under Chingmegnu or Tamlu These languages form a link between the other Naga languages, and Kachin or Singpho. Tableng, Tamlu and Mojung have a special characteristic of their own in that they possess an organic conjugation of the verb; a development which is not found in the other Naga languages and Singpho and only to a small extent in the Bodo group. A long description of the Naga dialects will be found in the census report for 1891 (pages 163—176)

The Eastern group.

159 The next group is the Kachin which has two representatives in Assam Singpho and Doanya, which are spoken by a few persons censused in Lakhimpur and Sibsagar The total number returned was Singpho 1 053 and Doanya 717 as compared with 1 886 for the two languages in 1891 when no separate return was prepared for Doanya. An account of Singpho will be found on page 185 of Mr Gait s report

The Kachin group.

160 The Kuki-Chin group includes the ten languages noted in the margin. Manipuri, or Meitei, is used in all districts of the provi ce in which natives of that State have settled. Jangshen and Sairang have been returned from the Naga Hills and Mhar and Hallam from Sylhet but the great centre of this group of languages is the tract of country included in the Cachar district Manipur and the Lushai Hills so no comparison with the figures of 1891 is possible

The Kuki-Chin group.

Language		Number returned.
Kuki	—	17,600
Manipuri	—	200,700
Chin		8,150
Kaiem		87
Lushai	—	70,81
Mhar	—	50
Sairghai	—	4,700
Jangshen		2,600
Sairang		73
Lakher	—	2,512

The word Kuki has been applied to the various tribes that have at different times occupied the Lushai Hills, and have been driven northwards by successive waves of emigration from the east and south The Rangkhols and Betes were the first to move *on to the plains, and to them is applied the term Old Kuki, while their successors, the* Thadous and Jangshens, who were in their turn driven out by the Lushais, are styled New Kukis ; though the use of the latter term is to be deprecated as suggesting a connection between the Rangkh ls and Jangshens which does not exist This group of languages belongs to the Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman family but they are descended from a language which must have had in many details a more antique form than Burmese, and which sometimes agreed with Tibetan. They are also connected with Bodo and the Naga group. The languages are still in that inconvenient stage in which there are distinct names for each kind of thing in a particular class, but no word to express the class as a whole. Thus, in Lushai there are no less than twenty different translations of the simple word basket, and different words for each kind of deer but no word for deer as a whole. There is no word even for the simple idea sister though there are separate names for an elder sister, a younger sister a sister next to one s self in age, and so on. There is no word for father in the abstract —a father must be thought and spoken of as the father of someone.

161. The Tai or Shan family has five representatives,—Khamti A tonia Nora Phakiyal and Turung —but the total number of persons returned is only 3,362 all of whom were censused in Lakhimpur and Sibsagar According to Dr Grierson these forms of speech are not separate languages, but are merely dialects of Northern Shan. The Khamtis were the first section of the tribe to split off from the parent stock and their dialect which is *spoken by 1,490 person is less like Shan than the speech of the other sections* of the tribes who have migrated into Assam in more recent times Turung has the closest

The Tai family

affinity to Khamti, but there is no certainty whether the twelve persons shown in the tables as speaking Turung really use that language, or whether it is Singpho that is meant The Turungs on their way to Assam were taken captive by the Singphos, who did not allow them to use their own form of speech, and the result is that, though there is a distinct Turung dialect, the ordinary language used by a Turung is Singpho Aitonia is very closely allied to Shan, and was returned by 1,569 people, as compared with 2 only in 1891, when they must, I think, have been shown as speaking Khamti or Shan unspecified

Language

Mon-Anam family

162 In 1891, Khasi was classed as a language by itself, as at that time all attempts to affiliate it with any of the great linguistic families had proved unsuccessful but the labours of Professor Kuhn have shown that it is not an isolated form of speech, but a member of the Mon-Anam family Both in vocabulary and the structure and form of the sentence, Khasi is closely connected with the Palaung—Wa group of dialects which are used by tribes living on the upper middle course of the Mekong The extent to which this discovery throws light on the origin of the Khasis, who differ in such material particulars from the tribes which surround them on every side, will be discussed in the chapter on caste

Foreign languages

163 Of foreign languages spoken in the province, the one most commonly returned was eastern Hindi, which is used by 334,100 persons, 58 per cent of whom are found in the Surma Valley, and 27 per cent in the two districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur

164 The coolie groups of languages are fairly well represented, as will be seen from the statement in the margin, but the figures are, I fear, of very little value The number of Mundas, Santals, and such-like folk can best be ascertained from the caste table, and, owing to the invincible tendency of the enumerator to enter Bengali or Deshwali for any foreign language, the returns do not indicate in any way the actual extent to which a dialect is in use No less than 115,000 persons were returned in Sibsagar as speaking Bengali, but it is, I should think, doubtful whether Bengali was really the correct entry for as many as 15,000, and similar discrepancies between the census returns and the actual state of things are to be seen in Darrang and Lakhimpur

	1901	1891
Mundari	37 411	20,227
Santali ...	30 129	19 191
Oriya	23 761	11 867
Oraon ..	10 791	9 433
Kandhi	11 827	1 341

In this connection, Statement No III suggests some interesting reflections Oraon is spoken by 45 per cent of the Oraons, as compared with 53 in 1891, Mundari by 46 per cent of the Mundas, as compared with 44 per cent, but Santali by only 39 per cent of the Santals, as compared with 83 per cent ten years ago The figures for the language are 1901 (30,129), 1891 (19,191), and for the caste 77,680 and 23,220, and the great discrepancy in the percentage of Santali speakers makes me doubt whether the figures for the caste in 1901 are correct The main Dravidian castes and tribes are split up into a large number of sub-castes, and a considerable number of persons returned the sub castes, instead of the proper designation Many of these sub-castes have the same name, and I am inclined to think that Mundas, Oraons, and other persons of this class have got themselves tabulated as Santals, owing to our inability to discover the main caste to which they really belonged It would have been impossible to stop the work to verify all the cases in which a sub-caste was returned, and in one case in which I did make a reference the people themselves were unable to throw any light on the matter

Telugu and Tamil.

165 Telugu and Tamil together are returned by 7,756 persons, which is probably considerably below the actual figure, as over 21,000 persons were born in Madras Even here, we cannot definitely measure the actual amount of error in our figures, as coolies, after they come to the province, learn to speak a mongrel dialect, or 'coolie *bât*,' and often cease to use, and ultimately forget, their own language *

Naipali

166 The return for Naipali (20,193) is also probably far from correct Naipali is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by the upper classes in Nepal, whereas the minor Nepalese languages, such as Gurung, Magar, Jimdar, Yakha, etc, are members of the Tibeto-Burman family, and it is probable that a large number of persons returned themselves under the head of Naipali, who should really have been shown under the Tibeto-Burman group We can hardly, however, blame our enumerators for this, as they could not, as a body, be expected to be acquainted with all the languages of Nepal Nepalese themselves, when questioned, nearly always describe themselves as Nepali by caste and Nepali by language, and the true caste and language can only be elicited by a painful cross examination, conducted by

anguage. wrong Special efforts were made on this occasion to get a correct return of the Nepalese languages, and the result is far from unsatisfactory In 1891 only three minor languages of Nepal were returned and the total number of speakers was 231 on this occasion we have details for sixteen languages, which were spoken by 6 098 people.

Concluding remarks.

167 It has been suggested that a return of the books published in the vernaculars of the province may throw light upon the movement in favour of a revival of vernacular literature; but I doubt whether there is any marked tendency in this direction in Assam. During the last ten years, 217 books have been published in Assamese, 37 in Khasi, 19 in Garo 19 in Manipuri, and 9 in Naga. Most of these works are no doubt of an educational character and many of them have been published by or under the auspices of the Missionaries residing in the province. Seventy-eight Bengali books have been registered in Assam, but the number written by natives of the Surma Valley and registered in Calcutta is in all probability largely in excess of this.

It is doubtful, however whether the language table in Assam can ever be of much value from the statistical point of view I have already shown that it throws but little light on the problem of the growth or decay of the indigenous forms of speech, as too much has of necessity to be left to the discretion of the individual and for foreign languages the return can never be correct till our philologists have become enumerators.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Population by language

Language	Persons	Males	Females	Proportion per 10,000 of population
1	2	3	4	5
Nagpuri	5,811	2,898	2,913	9
Marwari	7,202	5,609	1,593	12
Hindustani	17,873	13,158	4,715	29
Eastern Hindi	334,100	188,082	146,018	545
Assamese	1,349,784	685 098	664,686	2,203
Bengali	2,948,183	1,512,642	1,435,541	4,812
Oriya	23,761	12,328	11,433	38
Kandhi or Khond	11,827	5,832	5,995	19
Oraon	10,791	5,724	5,067	17
Telugu	5,259	2,812	2,447	8
Mundari	37,411	19,282	18,129	61
Santali	30,129	16,055	14,074	49
Naipali	20,193	14,258	5,935	32
Miri	40,472	21,515	18,957	66
Bodo, or Plains Kachari	218,049	108,595	109,454	356
Dimasa, or Hills Kachari	19,776	10,343	9,433	32
Garo	133,411	67 355	66,056	217
Lalung	16,414	7,864	8,550	26
Rabha	20,243	9,272	10,971	33
Tipura	10,403	5,235	5,168	17
Naga	69,641	35,041	34,600	113
Mikir	82,283	42,512	39,771	134
Kuki	47,042	22,754	24,288	76
Manipuri	255,765	126,509	129,256	417
Khasi	123,549	58,719	64,830	201
Synteng	54,253	24,982	29,271	88
English	2,234	1,635	599	3
Angami	27,865	13,980	13,885	45
Ao Chungli	17,623	8,376	9,247	28
Ao Mongsen	10,512	5,018	5,494	17
Kachcha Naga	6 296	3,255	3,041	10
Lhota	16,962	8,933	8,029	27
Lushai or Duhlen	72,011	32,030	39,981	117

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II.

Distribution of principal languages.

Districts.	Distribution by language of mother of population.						Distribution by numbers of persons speaking each language.				
	Bengali.	Assamese.	Eastern Hindi.	Manipuri.	Bodo or Plains Kachari.	Others.	Bengali.	Assamese.	Eastern Hindi.	Manipuri.	Bodo or Plains Kachari.
			4		6	7		9	10	11	12
Cachar Plains	6,149	35	2,137	1,079	...	600	865	11	2,653	1,750	...
Sylhet	9,226	4	475	27		67	7,016	7	3,191	1,120	15
Total Surma Valley	8,745	9	735	276		833	7,83	18	5,844	2,870	15
Goalpara	6,926	246	279	...	1,803	Garo ... ... 315 Rabha ... ... 903 Others 38	1,285	85	587	...	3,822
Kamrup	115	8,318	77	2	14	353	23	3,638	136	3	3,084
Darrang	1,862	5,081	360	...	1,631	Mondari ... 197 Naipali 38 Others ... 73	3	1,969	364	...	2,312
Nowgong	571	6,558	541	1	244	Mikir ... ... 1 Lalung 483 Others ... 290	51	1,268	433	1	993
Sibsagar	1,028	5,936	647		47	Mikir ... 38 Miri ... 247 Khond ... 73 Others ... 639	39	2,630	1,158	6	128
Lakhimpur	2,148	2,934	1,115	4	59	Miri 899 Mundari 954 Santhali 14 Others ... 1,043	171	1,083	1,573	6	23
Total Brahmaputra Valley	2,289	5,135	515		828	Mikir ... 26 Miri ... 51 Mundari 133 Others ... 683	2,034	9,653	4,041	6	9,951
Total Plains	5,541	2,554	626	14	41	797	9,9 5	9,681	9,885	2,886	9,964

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II—*continued*

Distribution of principal languages—continued

Districts	Distribution by language of 10,000 of population						Distribution by residence of 10,000 speaking each language				
	Bengali	Assamese	Eastern Hindi	Manipuri	Bodo or Plains Kachari	Others	Bengali	Assamese	Eastern Hindi	Manipuri	Bodo or Plains Kachari
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lushai Hills	64	20	22		4	Lushai 8,735 Chin 261 Lakher 390 Naipali 163 Others 341	2	1	6		2
North Cachar	998	71		52	2	Dimasa 2,380 Hindustani 2,172 Naga 1,179 Rangkhol 1,162 Punjabi 571 Amri 327 Others 1,086	14	2	.	8	
Naga Hills	26	38	43	16	8	Angami 2,720 Ao Chungli 1,720 Lhota 1,656 Ao Mongsem 1,026 Kachcha Naga 614 Sema 569 Others 1,564	1	3	13	7	4
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	85	72	58	6		Khasi 5,940 Synteng 2,682 Mikir 649 Others 508	6	11	35	5	
Garo Hills	1,309	4	19	5	46	Garo 7,734 Rabha 455 Others 428	61	0 45	8	4	29
Total Hill districts	436	41	36	10	13	Khasi 2,129 Garo 1,955 Lushai 1,271 Synteng 958 Angami 493 Dimasa 212 Others 2,446	84	18	62	24	35
Manipur	9	3	62	6,375		Naga 2,090 Kuki 1,413 Others 48	1	1	53	7,090	1
Total for the Province	4,812	2,203	545	417	356	1,667	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

Language.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Percentage of tribe speaking tribal language at the two last enumerations

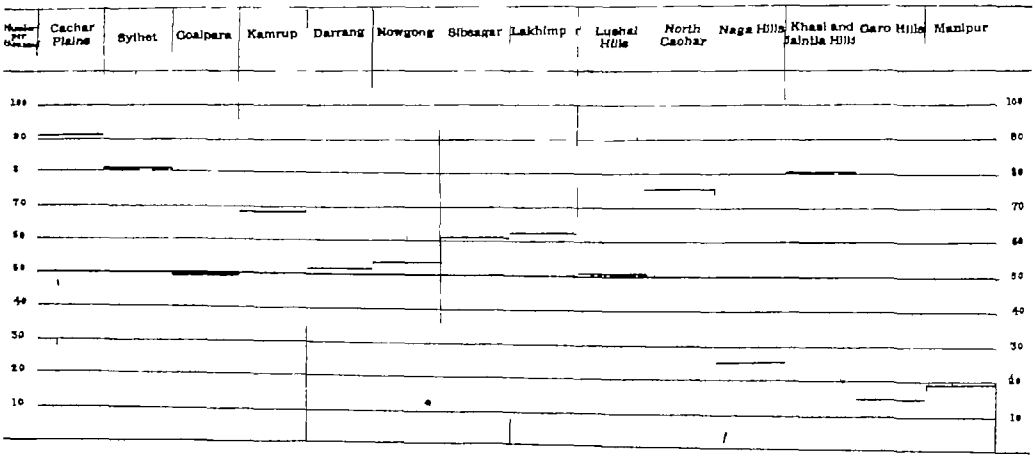
Language.	Number recorded in 1901.	Number recorded in 1891	Difference.	Percentage on tribe. 1901.	Percentage on tribe. 1891.	Tribe total. 1901.	Tribe total. 1891.
		2				7	8
Oraon	9,791	9,433	+ 1,358	45·2	55	23,86	7,736
Mundari	37,41	20,227	+17 84	46·3	43·7	80,693	45,244
Santali	30, 29	9 9	+ ,938	38·7	82·6	77,680	23,220
Miri	40,47	35,330	+ 4,942	86·6	94·9	46,720	37,430
Bodo group. Bodo, Dimasa and Mech ...	237,825	266,547	—28,722	75·5	85·0	314,787	314,579
Chutia ...	2,364	7	+ 2,357	...	...	...	...
Hojai	64	2,799	— 2,635		...	...	...
Garo	33,4	120,473	+12,938	1·2	100·6	13 ,746	19,754
Koch	3,742	3,604	+ 138	...	...	...	...
Lalung	16,414	40,204	—23,790	46·2	76 6	35·5 3	52,423
Moran	78	...	+ 78	...		...	...
Rabha	20,243	309	+ 9,934	30·0	7	67,265	69,374
T pera	10,403	8,017	+ 2,386	...	...	...	...
Mikir	82,783	90,836	— 7,953	94·2	95·1	87,335	94,829

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Number f books registered i Assam during the ten years from 891 *to* 1900.

Language.	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Books in Assam in any language made with but in Bengal during the decade from 1891 to 1900.	Grand total.
					6				10		12	13	14
Bengali	17	14			4	2		...	...	...	78	...	78
Assamese			...		4		6	5	5	6	86	18	204
Khasi			...		...	...		...	3	7	1	13	34
Sanskrit		1		...		...		...		...	4	...	4
Garo		...							...	...		7	8
English and Bengali	4			...	...	...		...	...	...	6	...	6
Bengali and Khasi	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	1	...			
Bengali and Sanskrit ...	3		...	...		...	...	...	...	...	5	...	5
English and Khasi		...	...	...	...		...	...					
English and Assamese		...				...	...	...		3	4	6	
Assamese and Sanskrit		...		...	...	...		...	...	...			
Bengali	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	
Mikir	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			1
Naga A	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Angami		...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...		4	4
Tangkhul				...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
unspecified ...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		3	
Garo and Bengali ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			1
Manipuri		...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		13	3
and Bengali ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		4	4
and Hindi ...	...	...	...			...	...	...	...	...			
English and Bengali	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	
Total	3	9		1	8	3	6	3	42	16	2	187	377

Diagram illustrating the prevalence of education amongst the male population of each district



CHAPTER IX.

EDUCATION

Education

168 Out of the 6,126,343 persons censused in the province, only 222,386 have been returned as knowing how to read and write, of whom 209,252 were men, and 13,134 women, or, to put it in another way, 67 men and 4 women in every 1,000 of each sex are literate

Accuracy of return

169 The return of literacy is beset with a certain amount of difficulty In the first place it is not always easy to determine what the expression should include A considerable number of people can read and write, but only, as the Scotchman jokes, "with difficulty," and it is not easy to say at exactly what stage the claimant to the title should be described as literate The standard of knowledge exacted was probably low, as the average enumerator is not a man of great literary attainments himself, and would be contented with but little in others, but any excess in this direction must have been to some extent corrected in the abstracting office, as literates may have been occasionally overlooked, but never improperly inserted in the tables

Education by religion

170 The proportion of literates to every thousand males amongst the four main religions of the province is Christians 325, Hindus 90, Muhammadans 44, Animists 9 The high degree of education amongst Christians is due to the fact that this religion includes the European and Eurasian population, amongst whom the proportion of children is small and of illiterate adults inappreciable, and to the efforts of the missionaries, who generally succeed in imparting a certain amount of instruction to their converts The disregard by Muhammadans of the advantages of education is very marked, and there does not seem to be much prospect of change in the near future, as the proportion of literate boys between 10 and 15 (37 per mille) is very small in comparison with that for Hindus (92 per mille) The extremely low rate amongst the Animistic tribes is partly due to the fact that education spreads very slowly amongst them, partly to the tendency amongst those of their numbers who can read and write to become either Christians or Hindus

Education by age

171 The figures in the margin show the distribution of literate males in four age periods. It is noteworthy that the proportion of literates between 15 and 20 is lower than that between 20 and 40 A boy, if he is ever going to master the intricacies of reading and writing, will presumably do so before he is 15, and the fact that only 92 out of every 1,000 are literate at this age period, as compared with 94 at 20 and over, suggests that education is not spreading very rapidly amongst the younger generation The Muhammadans are, however, responsible for this state of affairs, as for Hindus, Christians, and Animistic tribes, the converse holds good, the highest proportion of literates being found between 15 and 20

Out of 1 000 males number literate—

0—10 ...	13
10—15 ..	65
15—20	92
20 and over	94

Literacy by districts

172 The order in which the different districts stand with regard to education will be found in Subsidiary Table III. The Cachar Plains are first, with 91 literate males in every 1,000, next come Sylhet and (*mirabile dictu*) the Khasi and Jaintia Hills bracketted with 81 This great development of education amongst the hillmen is due to the efforts of the Welsh Missionaries, to whom reference has already been made in Chapter IV The large proportion of literate males in North Cachar (76) is accounted for by the presence of the Assam-Bengal Railway staff, as the hillman in his normal state has a healthy contempt for book learning, and in the Naga and Garo Hills the ratio is as low as 25 and 15 The number of educated men censused in the Lushai Hills (51) is very high for a newly-annexed district, but the Lushai is, I believe, easily wooed from the paths of barbarism In the Assam Valley the proportion of literates is low, ranging from 68 in Kamrup to 49 in Goalpara,—but nearly all the inhabitants are cultivators, who, after all, do not require to go to school to learn to follow the plough. The extent to which education is advancing in the different districts can best be learnt from an examination of the reports of the department which is concerned with these matters, but the figures showing the proportion of literates amongst the rising

Education. generation throw a certain amount of light upon the question The proportion of boys between 10 and 15 who know how to read and write is highest in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills (96 per mille) next comes Sylhet with 80 Kamrup with 75 the Cachar Plains with 73, and Sibsagar with 63 This order is much what we should expect to find except with regard to Cachar which has shown the highest proportion of literates at both of the last enumerations.

Progress of education during the last ten years.

178. It is by no means easy to measure the progress of education during the last ten years, as in 1891 the population was divided into three groups —learners literate, and illiterate,—learners including all persons still under instruction, whether they were able to read and write or not. At the present census no attempt has been made to ascertain the number of persons under instruction and before we can make any comparison with the figures for 1891, we must make some estimate of the proportion of learners in that year who are entitled to be classed as literate under the rules of 1901

The simplest method is to have recourse to the age table. We are fairly safe in assuming that all learners over 15 have mastered the beggarly elements and Subsidiary Table VI accordingly compares the proportion of literates over 15 in 1901 with the proportion of literates *plus* learners of that age in 1891 The first thing that attracts our attention is that, in a considerable number of districts the proportion is lower than it was ten years ago. In the hill districts the ratio for males has risen from 27 to 43, in Kamrup from 45 to 56 and in Darrang and Nowgong the proportion has advanced by 2 per mille but in the Surma Valley and in Goalpara Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the proportion of literates has declined. Between 1881 and 1891 there was a great spread of education, and though as pointed out by Mr Gait it cannot be expected that the same proportional increase would occur in each decade as took place in the first when education was still in its infancy we should hardly expect to find a positive decrease in the proportion of those who know how to read and write. A moment's reflection, however shows that a considerable part of the increase in population that has taken place in several of the districts of the province is due to the *importation of garden coolies. These persons are practically all illiterate, and as, when* calculating the proportion of literacy they make a considerable addition to the divisor and no appreciable one to the dividend, we must, if we wish to form an accurate estimate of the spread of education amongst the general population in the ten districts, eliminate the effect produced by this influx of ignorant persons. We know the total number of coolies imported into each district during each of the past ten years, but we do not know the rate at which they have been decreasing or the proportion of the total who are males. An annual decrement of 20 per mille seems, however to be a sufficient allowance to make for the excess of deaths over births and for those who return to their country and I have assumed that the provincial proportion of sexes hold good and that 55 per cent. of the total are men If these assumptions are correct, there were censused in Cachar 37 646, Sylhet 70,728 Darrang 40 283, Sibsagar 73,083, and Lakhimpur 74 900 males of the garden coolie class who ought not to be taken into account when calculating the proportion of literates. We are still left with our uncertainty as to the proportion of learners who were literate in 1891 and as we are no longer able to apply the age test I have assumed that 75 per cent. of the learners were able to read and write. If these suppositions are correct it appears that, after allowing for the effect produced by the influx of ignorant immigrants the proportion of male literates has risen in the Cachar Plains from 108 to 110 while in Sylhet it has been stationary In Darrang it has risen from 50 to 67 in Sibsagar from 68 to 79, and in Lakhimpur from 73 to 99. The absence of any appreciable advance in the Surma Valley seems strange, but it is borne out by the age returns. Anyone who has been in charge of a census office must be aware that there is an appreciable risk of entries of literacy being overlooked by the slip-copyists; and as I was dissatisfied with the figures for this portion of the province, I had the enumeration books re-examined for Cachar and for three out of the five subdivisions in Sylhet By this means I have, I think, succeeded in eliminating any error due to the system under which the figures were compiled and a reference to Subsidiary Table III shows that the census office cannot be responsible for the apparent stagnation in matters educational in the Surma Valley

In any community in which education is in a flourishing condition, the proportion of literates will be highest between 15 and 20 as the number of boys who do not learn to read till they are over 20 must be very small; while the period 20 and over includes a large number of people who had passed the school-going age before *pathsales* were as

This includes the male population transferred from Nowgong and the Naga Hills, practically all of whom are literate.

common as they are now In the districts in which education is making progress, and in which the figures are not seriously disturbed by the influx of literate and adult foreigners, we find the proportion of literates considerably higher at 15—20 than at 20 and over In Kamrup the proportion is 116 in one case, 100 in the other, in the Lushai Hills 89 and 78 and in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills 122 and 110 Whereas in the Cachar Plains the proportion at 15—20 is 117 and at 20 and over 130, and in Sylhet the figures are 106 and 115 Education

As I have said above, it is quite possible that a slip-copyist or sorter might overlook an entry of literacy, but these omissions would obviously be distributed over every age period, and though the proportion of literates between 15 and 20 might be reduced it would still remain higher than the proportion at 20 and over The low rate between 15 and 20 in the Surma Valley must, therefore, be due either to an actual decrease in the school-going tendencies of the population, a supposition which, on the face of it, is improbable, and which is negatived by the reports of the Education Department, or to enumerators having thought that the instructions of 1891 were still in force, and having in consequence declined to enter as 'literate' persons still under instruction, even in those cases in which they were really able to read and write

Female education

174 The literate woman is almost a negligible quantity, as only 4 out of every 1,000 can read and write Amongst Christians, the proportion is as high as 217, for Hindus it is 4, for Muhammadans it is 2, and for Animists 1

In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, where the proportion of Christians is very large, and where women enjoy exceptional advantages, the proportion is as high as 34, but in the remaining districts it varies between 5 in Lakhimpur and North Cachar and 0 in Manipur, where only 62 women knew how to read and write

Number of persons literate in English

175 Twenty thousand five hundred and forty-nine persons returned themselves as being literate in English, of whom 19,222 were males and 1,327 females Out of every 1,000 men, English is known by 115 Christians, 8 Hindus, 3 Muhammadans, and 1 Animist If we deduct the figures for Christians, many of whom are foreigners, to whom English is their mother tongue, it appears that 17,096 men and 242 women have acquired this form of speech A knowledge of English seems, however, to be spreading, as between 15 and 20, 8 per mille of the Hindus are acquainted with this language, as compared with 5 per mille at 20 and over Subsidiary Table IV shows the extent to which English is known in the different districts The Khasi and Jaintia Hills head the list, and it is not uncommon to find Khasis who can talk and understand English better than the *lingua franca* of India,—Hindostani, but outside Shillong the number of persons who possess more than a smattering of the language is small In Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, 21 per mille of the boys between 15 and 20 have returned themselves as literate in English, in Kamrup 15 and in Sylhet and Darrang 10 The proportion in the Cachar Plains is very low, and points either to a rigorous scrutiny by the enumerators of the claims put forward or to some mistake in abstraction, but as the literate slips were recopied for this district, the assumption is that they were correct The proportion of English-knowing boys between 15 and 20 is only 9 in the Surma Valley, as compared with 15 in the valley of the Brahmaputra, but my own experience is that, in Sylhet at any rate, English is not as extensively employed as in Assam In Sylhet town the Bench is often addressed in the vernacular, though such a thing is rare, even in a subdivision in the other valley, and in the course of my tour I came across a considerable number of charge superintendents in Sylhet who only understood Bengali

Education by caste

176 Subsidiary Table V shows the proportion of literates in selected castes At the head of the list we find the Barna Brahman, with 500, and the Baidya, with 419 literate out of every 1,000 persons These castes, however, are not strongly represented in the province, there being only 3,144 of the former and 5,154 of the latter, and they cannot be considered typical Next come the Brahman and Kayastha, with 297 and 279 per mille, and after them the Native Christian, with 224 the Missionaries, as a rule, ministering to the intellectual as well as to the spiritual needs of their flock It is a significant fact that three out of the next four castes—the Shaha, the Das and the Brittial Baniya—are discontented with the position they occupy in the Hindu social system, and the degree of education to which they have attained suggests that their manner of life entitles them to a higher place than that usually accorded to them The figures for the Brittial Baniya are particularly suggestive In the Assam Valley this caste would generally be ranked even below the Nadiyal, yet they have a higher proportion of literates than the Kalita, a caste of undoubted respectability The race castes, such as the Ahom, Rajbansi, Chu-

Education. tiya and Koch, come fairly low down on the list, the two last having only 24 literate persons out of every 1,000. The humble Hindu castes, such as the Hira, Kurmi, Muchi, Namasudra (Chandal) and Bhunmali, have proportions ranging from 17 to 13 the Bhumij and Bhuiya have 6 the Munda and Santhal 2 while amongst the Oraons only 1 person in every 1 000 can read and write. Of the hill tribes, the Khasi is the most educated with 23 per mille, and after him comes the Lushai, with 12 Then, there is a considerable fall to the Kachari, 7 and the proportion continues to dwindle down through Miris and Lalungs to the Mikirs, who have only 1 per mille, and the Nagas who have even less only 1 person out of every 4,300 having been entered as literate in the schedules.

Out of every 1 000 literate people in the province, 146 are Brahmans and 109 Kayasthas after this comes a great drop,—to Dases 48, Kalitas 45, Shahas 42 and Native Christians 34. The proportion borne by the literates in a caste to the total literates is the result of (*a*) the numbers of the caste, and (*b*) the extent to which its members have availed themselves of their educational opportunities, so that these figures in themselves do not suggest any conclusions of special interest.

Table VII shows the proportion of persons in each district literate in the various vernaculars. Bengali is the usual language in the Surma Valley and Goalpara, and Assamese in Kamrup Darrang, Nowgong and Sibsagar In Lakhimpur owing to the large foreign population, more than half the literate population are literate in languages other than Assamese.

Education

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Education by age and sex

GENERAL POPULATION

Age period	Number in 1,000						Number in 1,000 literate in English.			Females to 1,000 males		
	Literate			Illiterate.								
	Both sexes	Males.	Females	Both sexes	Males	Females	Both sexes	Males.	Females.	Literate.	Illiterate.	Literate in English
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
0—10	7	13	2	993	987	998		1		125	1,020	169
10—15	39	65	7	961	935	993	4	6		87	862	54
15—20	48	92	8	952	908	992	6	11	1	96	1,217	63
20 and over	51	94	5	949	906	995	5	9	1	49	1,011	69
All ages	36	67	4	964	933	996	3	6		63	1,012	69

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Education by age, sex and religion

Age period	Number in 1,000.						Number in 1,000 literate in English			Females to 1,000 males		
	Literate			Illiterate.								
	Both sexes	Males	Females.	Both sexes	Males	Females	Both sexes	Males	Females.	Literate	Illiterate	Literate in English
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Hindus												
0—10	11	19	2	989	981	998		1		98	1,024	23
10—15	54	92	7	946	908	993	5	9		60	874	15
15—20	65	123	8	935	877	992	8	16		69	1,177	15
20 and over	66	121	5	934	879	995	5	10		36	1,019	10
All ages	49	90	4	951	910	996	4	8		46	1,016	12
Muhammadans												
0—10	4	7	1	996	993	999				97	1,018	98
10—15	22	37	2	978	963	998	2	3		47	791	15
15—20	27	56	2	973	944	998	3	5		51	1,251	17
20 and over	38	69	2	962	931	998	2	4		24	954	12
All ages	24	44	2	976	956	998	2	3		33	978	14
Christians												
0—10	68	75	61	932	925	939	16	18	14	799	1,009	760
10—15	344	352	334	656	648	666	50	57	43	831	902	664
15—20	394	460	341	606	540	659	73	84	64	921	1,512	944
20 and over	351	433	258	649	567	742	143	186	95	533	1,169	456
All ages	272	325	217	728	675	783	89	115	62	634	1,099	510
Animists												
0—10	1	1		999	999	1,000				218	1,013	91
10—15	6	10	2	994	990	998		1		209	950	111
15—20	10	20	3	990	980	997	1	1		186	1,286	163
20 and over	7	12	1	993	988	999	1	1		129	1,063	40
All ages	5	9	1	995	991	999		1		152	1,050	64

Education.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Education by age sex and natural divisions and districts.

Natural divisions and districts.	Literates per mille. All ages. Total.	Males.	Females.	Literates per 1,000. 0—10. Males.	Females.	10— Males.	Females.	15—20. Males.	Females.	20 and over. Males.	Females.
		2		3			6		10	11	12
Cachar Plains ...	50	9	4	9		73	6	117	6	130	4
Sylhet	43	8	4	9		80	6	06	6	1 5	5
Surma Valley ...	44	83	4			79	6	08	6	118	5
Goalpara ...	27	49		7	1	46	4	63	3	73	3
Kamrup ...	33	68		13	1	73	4	6	3	100	3
Darrang	29	52	3	9		45	4	7	6	72	3
Nowgong ...	28	54		7	1	49	3	78	3	79	
Sibsagar ...	34	6	4			63	6	88	3	8	5
Lakhimpur ...	35	62	5	8		53	5	85	6	84	6
Brahmaputra Valley ...	32	58	3			58	5	85	6	82	4
Total Plains... ...	38	7	4	4		69	5	97	6	00	4
Lushai Hills	5	5			...	80		89		78	
North Cachar ...	54	76	5	3		9	3	37	3	96	7
Naga Hills ...	3	55		3	...	4	3	39	3	36	
Khasi and Jaintia Hills...	57	8	34	8		96	6	22	66		35
Garo Hills ...	8	5					3		5	24	
Total Hill Districts ...	32	50	14	8	4	47	27	75	26	70	4
Manipur	9	9	—		—	7	—	22		3	1
Total Province ...	36	67	4	3		65	7	92	8	94	5

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Engli h education by age x and natural divisions and districts.

Natural divisions and districts.	Literates per 1,000. 0— 0. Males.	Females.	0— 5. Males.	Females.	5—20. Males.	Females.	20 and over Males	Females.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cachar Plain			1		3		5	1
Sylhet			5	--	10		7	
Surma Valley ...			5		9		7	
Goalpara ...	1		8		9		6	
Kamrup	--		6	--	15	--	8	
Darrang	1		4		10		10	
Nowgong			6		8	1	7	
Sibsagar	1		3	1	21	1	13	2
Lakhimpu	1		11	1	21	1	16	
Brahmap tra V lley	1		8		15	1	0	1
Total Plains	1		6		12		9	1
Lu hal Hills ...			3		3		7	
North Cachar					5	1	16	2
Naga Hills			5		5		3	
Khasi and Jai tia Hills	2	1	18	6	23	8	23	4
Garo Hills		--			1	---	2	
Total Hill District	1		8	2	10	3	12	2
Manipur		---			2		2	
Total Province	1		6		11	1	9	1

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Education by selected castes, tribes, or races

Education

Castes tribes, or races	Number literate out of 1,000 in each caste.			Out of 1,000 literate persons, number in each caste.			Number literate in English out of 1,000 in each caste		
	Persons	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males	Females.	Persons.	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Barna Brahman	500	868	50	7	7	5	59	60	28
Baidya	419	596	206	10	8	37	351	442	35
Brahman	297	517	27	146	149	101	111	115	29
Kayastha	279	471	56	109	105	172	177	193	16
Native Christian	224	271	176	34	22	226	155	186	107
Shaha	181	355	10	42	43	19	52	53	20
Ganak	142	282	7	13	14	6	38	39	14
Das	64	121	5	48	49	29	40	41	3
Brittial Baniya (Hari)	61	110	13	2	2	4	143	154	57
Barui	58	107	5	5	5	3	30	31	
Teli	56	104	3	10	10	4	29	29	20
Manipuri	53	102	2	11	11	3	12	12	
Kalita	50	93	2	45	47	13	86	86	41
Napit	47	87	3	7	7	3	23	24	
Kewat	37	71	2	11	11	4	78	80	
Jugi	33	62	2	24	24	15	13	13	5
Sutradhar	31	61	1	2	3	1	29	30	
Ahom	31	59	2	25	26	11	163	165	80
Rajbansi	30	58	1	16	17	6	39	40	35
Boria	27	54	1	2	2	1	66	68	
Chutiya	24	46		9	10	1	101	102	
Dhoba	24	46	1	2	2	1	31	32	
Koch	24	46	1	24	25	5	67	68	29
Goala	23	40	2	4	4	4	38	40	
Kumar	23	44	1	3	3	1	43	42	56
Khasi	23	36	10	11	9	46	125	151	40
Malo (Jhalo)	22	37	2	2	2	1	15	15	
Kamar	2-	42	2	3	3	2	46	46	37
Nadiyal (Dom Patni)	20	37	2	17	18	13	25	26	
Kaibartta	18	34	1	7	7	2	52	52	37
Tanti	18	32	3	2	2	2	79	83	31
Hira	17	34	1	1	1		7	7	
Kurmi	16	26	1	1	2	1	30	28	83
Muchi	15	25	1	1	1	1			
Dhobi	14	27	1	1	1	1	24	25	
Namasudra (Chandal)	14	26	1	10	11	7	10	10	12
Bhuin mali	13	26	1	3	3	2	4	4	
Tushai	12	25	1	3	3	2	11	11	
Bauri	9	17	1	2	2	1	14	14	
Kachari	7	14		8	8	4	76	78	
Chamar	7	12		1	1				
Hari	7	13					94	97	
Bhumij	6	11	1	1	1	2	46	46	45
Bhuiya	6	12		1	1	1	65	68	
Rabha	6	13		2	2		33	33	
Synteng	5	9	2	1	1	3	34	41	
Miri	4	8		1	1		92	93	
Musahar	4	7							
Lalung	3	7			1		9	9	
Garo	2	4	1	1	1	3	63	68	29
Munda	2	4	1	1	1	2	29	33	
Mech	2	4		1	1	...	80	80	
Santal	2	3	1	1	1	1	57	57	56
Oraon	1	2							
Mikir	1	2					14	15	
Kuki	1	1							
Naga		1					324	374	
Pan									

Education.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VI

Progress of education since 1891 by natural divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts.	Number of literates in 1,000 males.		Number of literates in 1,000 females.		Variation, + or —.	
	1901	1891	1901.	1891	Males.	Females.
1		3	4	5	6	7
Cachar Plains	77	91	3	2	—14	+ 1
Sylhet	66	69	3	2	— 3	+ 1
Surma Valley ...	68	73	3	2	— 5	+ 1
Goalpara	42	46	2	1	— 4	+ 1
Kamrup ...	56	45	2	1	+11	+ 1
Darrang	45	43	2	1	+ 2	+ 1
Nowgong	46	44	1	1	+ 2	
Sibsagar	51	57	3	2	— 6	+ 1
Lakhimpur	54	65	4	2	—11	+ 2
Brahmaputra Valley ..	50	49	2	1	+ 1	+ 1
Lushai Hills	49	32	1		+17	+ 1
North Cachar	74	11	4	...	+63	+ 4
N ga Hill ..	23	15	1		+ 8	+ 1
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	64	43	24	12	+21	+12
Garo Hills	13	13	2	1		+ 1
Hill districts	43	27	10	5	+16	+ 5
Manipur ...	18					
T tal Prov[illegible] ce	55	58	3	2	— 3	+ 1

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VII.

Education by language and districts.

Districts.	Number in 1,000 literate in		
	Assamese (and Khasi in Khasi and Jaintia Hills).	Bengali.	Other languages.	English.
		3	4	5
Cachar Plains ..		43	6	2
Sylhet		42	2	3
Goalpara	...	23	3	3
Kamrup ..	31	6	3	3
Darra g	18	7	4	4
N wgo g ..	22	6	3	3
S bsaga ..	23	8	4	6
Lakhimpur	5	12	9	7
Lushai Hills	1	3	20	2
North Cachar		2	30	9
Naga Hills	1	2	0	1
Khasi nd Jaintia Hills ...	46	5	5	10
Garo Hills		7	2	1
Ma lpu ..		5	4	1

CHAPTER X.

INFIRMITIES

Infirmities

Accuracy of return

177 The four infirmities selected for record at the census were insanity, deaf-mutism from birth, blindness and leprosy, but before examining the results disclosed in the tables at the end of the chapter, it would be as well to consider the extent to which the figures can be accepted as correct The returns were collected by unprofessional persons, and on this ground alone should be accepted with some reservation, and in addition to this disqualification there are several causes which would tend to affect their accuracy The instructions laid down that only those who were deaf and dumb 'from birth' should be entered in the schedules, but there was at first amongst many of the enumerators an impression that this restriction should also be applied to the remaining three infirmities, and it is possible that a certain number of those who were afflicted by blindness, leprosy and insanity in latter life were omitted on this account Special stress was laid on the necessity of entering blind 'of both eyes,' and when *kana* was found in the schedules, the person concerned was excluded from the return, as, strictly speaking, this epithet is only applicable to those who have lost the sight of a single eye The adjective is, however, loosely used in Lower Assam to indicate complete blindness, and it is possible that some of the *kanas* entered on the schedules had really entirely lost the power of vision People who were returned as deaf only were assumed not to be dumb, but dumbness was treated as genuine deaf-mutism, unless it was expressly stated that the individual in question could hear The return of lepers in Assam is always likely to be unduly swelled by the inclusion of leucoderma and the ulcers known as Naga sores, and the reduction in the proportion of the provincial population affected probably represents a closer approximation to the actual state of affairs than the figures for 1891

The system adopted for the compilation of the tables has also to be taken into consideration In 1881 the total number of afflicted persons was 10,620, in 1891 the numbers rose to 20,262, and the Superintendent in his report expressed the opinion that this large increase was due not so much to an actual increase in the number of infirm persons, as to an improvement in the system of compilation At this census the figures have fallen to 17,932, but I am not disposed to attribute this decline to any defect in the system under which the figures were prepared * In a considerable portion of Assam, the public health during the past decade has been phenomenally bad, and where all are sufferers it is not unreasonable to suppose that the infirm would suffer most, and that the death-rate amongst them would be higher than amongst the rest of the population Such increase of population as has taken place in the Valley of the Brahmaputra is chiefly due to immigration, and amongst immigrants the proportion of infirm persons is of necessity small,—the blind, the deaf mute and the leper seldom leaving their homes to seek their fortunes in another country

At the same time, it is only probable that the infirmity returns of this as of other censuses are defective No one, except the professional beggar, is anxious to publish his infirmities, and to such an extent does this reluctance affect the accuracy of the tables, even in England, that the Commissioners of the Census of 1891 felt themselves constrained to admit in their report that they feared that the returns of persons suffering from these several defects, and especially of those suffering from deafness and mental derangement, were in all probability excessively inaccurate I was naturally, however, inclined to regard with suspicion any decrease in the number of cases reported, and, as an additional precaution, I had the books of two districts (Darrang and Sibsagar), in which the deficiency was particularly marked, re-examined The result was only a small increase in the number of infirmities, and, although the work was done over again with especial care, the proportion of afflicted persons still remained lower than in 1891 In other districts, though the proportion for one infirmity fell, it rose for another, *e g*, in Cachar the number of male lepers per 10,000 fell from 16 to 11, but the number of male deaf-mutes rose from 5 to 9, and if the figures were prepared accurately for one infirmity, it follows from the system employed that they must be equally

* The three other provinces for which the figures for 1901 are before me also show a decrease

	1891	1901		1881	1901		1881	1901
Punjab	123,245	113,134	Bombay	78,407	47,374	Madras	89,093	79,859

Infirmities.

correct for the others. In North Cachar there is a very great decrease in the proportion of the afflicted; but half of the total population of this little subdivision consists of persons engaged on the construction of the railway who are obviously free from these special defects or they would not be where they are, and the total population is moreover so small that great variations in percentages are only natural.

INSANITY

178 From the statement in the margin, which shows the number of persons in 10 000 who are insane in Assam England, the Indian Empire and selected provinces, it appears that though *the ratio for insanity in Assam has decreased during the* last ten years, the proportion is still considerably higher than that of the Indian Empire and the three northern provinces in 1891 Mr Barnes in the report for that year was inclined to attribute this evil pre-eminence to cretinism which followed the Brahmaputra, and to trace some connection between mental derangement and the proximity of mountains but the district figures shown in Subsidiary Table I at the end of this chapter do not lend much support to this view Darrang consists of a long and narrow strip of land between the Himalayas and the Brahmaputra, intersected with numerous hill streams; but the proportion of lunatics of both sexes per 10 000 in the district after deducting those in the asylum who were born in other districts or provinces, is only 3 *i.e.* considerably less than the provincial average, while Lakhimpur which is surrounded by hills on three sides has the lowest rate of any district in the province.

Number (males in 10,000 of either sex).

	Males.	Females.
Assam, 1901	8	8
Assam, 1891	6	6
Bengal, 1891		5
North-Western Provinces, 1891		
Punjab, 1891	4	
Upper Burma, 1891	11	11
India, 1891	5	
England, 1891	88	89

Distribution and cause of insanity

It is possible that the comparative immunity from mental disease enjoyed by these districts is due to the presence of a large body of immigrants who though addicted to the consumption of intoxicating drugs must include amongst their numbers but a small proportion of congenital idiots; but in the hill districts themselves the rate is low being only 4 for the Assam Range. In the Lushai Hills, the proportion is extraordinarily high being 29 for males and 25 for females. The explanation offered is that the proportion of insane is actually above the average and that there is a tendency to enter as such, persons of weak intellect who in other districts would probably be omitted from the return. It is a noteworthy fact that Goalpara, as at the two preceding enumerations, has a much higher proportion of lunatics than any other district in the province, except the Lushai Hills.* This seems to indicate a certain tendency towards diseases of the brain in the Koch race, as the neighbouring district of Kuch Behar both in 1881 and *1891 had a larger proportion of insane persons than any other division of Bengal. The* connection appears to be racial rather than geographical, for the conditions of life on the north bank of the Brahmaputra do not vary much there being a large liquor drinking population both in Kamrup, Darrang and North Lakhimpur in all of which places the rate is low

Connection between drugs and insanity

179 The connection between insanity and the abuse of stimulants and more particularly of *ganja* is well known but cannot be traced *in* the census tables. In Lakhimpur where the number of insane persons is phenomenally small the average expenditure per head of the population on country spirits and *ganja* is as high as in any other district of the province, whereas in Goalpara the incidence of the excise revenue is particularly low The same contrasts were to be seen in 1891 and seem to justify us in the conclusion that the abuse of drugs produces no appreciable effect upon the sanity of the people †

Proportion between the sexes.

180 Subsidiary Table IV shows the number of insane females to 1 000 similarly affected males at each of the prescribed age periods. Below 5 females largely preponderate, but the total number of cases reported is too small to render any inferences possible. Between 15 and 25 the ratio is fairly high, due no doubt to insanity induced by puerperal fever and other uterine disorders but for the rest of life till 60 is reached the proportion of afflicted males largely exceeds that of the female insane. It is probable that this deficiency amongst women, which, for the whole province, amounts to no less than a per 10 000 is largely natural, women being less given to excess of any kind and less exposed to mental worry It is a significant fact moreover that in the hill districts, where women

* North Cachar in 1891 the proportion of lunatics was higher has in Goalpara, but Mr Gait considered the total number of cases reported to be too small to justify any conclusions being drawn.

† In individual cases no doubt the effect of drugs is most injurious, but the number of these cases is not sufficiently large to appreciably affect the insanity returns of the people as a whole.

and men are more on an equality, the ratio of insanity is the same for both sexes, while in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, where women, thanks to the matriarchal theory, have almost assumed the position of the dominant sex, the ordinary proportion is reversed Infirmities

181 From Table II, which shows the distribution of 10,000 insane persons by age periods, it appears that men are most liable to mental disease in early manhood and middle life, *i e*, between 20 and 45, while for women the reproductive period and the period of the change of life have special dangers This table does not, however, give a very correct idea of the connection between insanity and age, which is more clearly brought out by Table III, which shows the proportion of lunatics in each age period to the total number of persons living at that age The latter table suggests that either a considerable number of cases of senile dementia have been included in the return, or that insanity does not tend to shorten life, the proportion for males being higher in the 55—60 period than in any other, while amongst women the only period that shows a higher rate than 55 and over is 40—45

Distribution of insanity by age periods

182 The extraordinary freedom from insanity enjoyed by Assam, when compared with England, requires but little explanation In the first place, apart from the abuse of drugs,—a cause which, as I have shown above, it is by no means easy to connect with mental derangement,—there is little or nothing likely to produce diseases of the brain amongst these peaceful leisure-loving agriculturists The death-rate of Assam again compares most unfavourably with that of the British Isles, and many idiots are probably allowed to die who in England would have lived to swell the census rolls Lastly, we have to consider the comparative accuracy of the two enumerations In England, in 1891, 82 per cent of the mentally deranged were censused in asylums, where there could be no question of their omission Had the return of insanity been collected, as in Assam, by a house-to-house enquiry conducted by a most imperfectly-educated staff, there can, I think, be little doubt that the ratio would have been very largely reduced

Comparison with England.

DEAF-MUTISM

183 The statement in the margin shows the number of deaf-mutes, male and female, in each 10,000 of the population At the three last censuses deaf-mutism has been more prevalent in the hill districts than in the plains, and on the present occasion the distinction is very marked, the proportion per 10,000 males being 16 in the hills and 8 in the two Valleys, while for females the corresponding figures are 13 and 6 It is a well-known fact, however, that there is some connection between hilly country and this particular infirmity, though, whether the actual cause is to be found in the water of the mountain streams, or in the consanguineous marriages which are far from uncommon amongst hill tribes, is still uncertain Malaria and deaf-mutism are also supposed to have some bond of union, a theory which finds support in the fact that Nowgong, which has been more than decimated by *kala-ázár* during the last ten years, has a higher rate for males than any other plains district, while Sibsagar, which is situated in the healthiest portion of the Assam Valley, is singularly free from the affliction The same can, however, be said of Kamrup, where public health has been bad, while the Garo Hills, another feverish district, is also comparatively free, so that in Assam, at any rate, the connection can hardly be established Equally difficult is it to discover the supposed link between deaf-mutism and insanity, the latter infirmity being at a minimum in Nowgong and Lakhimpur, where deaf-mutism is fairly common

Number of deaf mutes in 10 000 of either sex.

	Males	Females
Assam 1901 ..	9	6
Assam 1891	10	8
Bengal, 1891 ..	12	7
North Western Provinces 1891	8	5
Punjab, 1891	12	8
Upper Burma, 1891	8	7
India, 1891	9	6
England, 1891	5	4

In the Naga Hills, the proportion is phenomenally high, being 49 for men and 45 for women The Deputy Commissioner, who was consulted as to the accuracy of the figures, writes

> I am not at all surprised to hear that the rate is very high, as in almost every village certainly amongst the Angamis there are deaf-mutes In some of the smaller villages almost every second person is either deaf and dumb or insane This I know from my personal experience The small villages to the north of Kohima are the worst in this respect I can only attribute the prevalence of the infirmity to the results of intermarriage, and the fact that it is more prevalent in the smaller villages would corroborate this, as Nagas, as a rule, marry in their own villages

184 Table III shows that the orders to restrict the return to those afflicted from birth were, as a rule, borne in mind, the proportion in both sexes being considerably higher between 5 and 25 than at the later ages, though the marked rise in the rate at 60 and over suggests the inclusion of a certain number of elderly people who had lost their sense of hearing. It is

Distribution by age

Infirmities.

obvious that the numbers of those afflicted from birth must decline at each successive age period as there are no means of repairing losses by death but it is equally obvious that a return of deaf mutism must be very incorrect for the first years of life, as this infirmity can hardly be detected in a small infant, and parents, even after their suspicions have been aroused, are extremely loath to admit that their children are deaf and dumb It is permissible therefore to correct the return by assuming that deaf mutes under 5 bear the same relation to the total population under 5 as deaf mutes between 5 and 10 do to the population of that age. If this correction is made, the number of afflicted in the province rises to 3 072 males and 2 093 females.

Comparison with other countries.

185 The proportion of deaf mutes in Assam is exactly equal to that prevailing over the whole Indian Empire in 1891 and lower than that in Bengal and the Punjab in that year Some explanation of this is to be found in the proportion borne by foreigners to the total population of the province, as the congenital deaf mute is not likely to leave his home to search for employment elsewhere but this in itself is not enough to account for all the facts,—the rate in Lakhimpur where the number of immigrants is very large, being comparatively high; while Kamrup the great centre of the indigenous population, has been remarkably free from this affliction at the last three censuses But though, in comparison with the rest of India, Assam is comparatively free from this infirmity it contrasts but unfavourably with England, the rate being nearly double of that prevailing in the British Isles. The explanation is no doubt to be found in the absence of medical aid and the insanitary conditions in which the great bulk of the population live.

Proportion between the sexes.

186. The proportion between the sexes is also noteworthy there being only 675 afflicted females to every thousand males. Deaf mutism is an infirmity which can scarcely be concealed, and there is no reason to question the accuracy of the figures a similar phenomenon being observable in England, where the Census Commissioners remarked in their last report that "amongst the deaf mutes as is the general, though not quite universal, rule amongst those who suffer from various forms of congenital malformation, the males far out number the females.

THE BLIND

Number of blind in 10,000 of either sex.

	Males.	Females.
Assam, 1901	14	
Assam, 1891	7	11
Bengal, 1891	18	10
North-Western Provinces, 1891	20	20
Punjab, 1891	21	17
Upper Burma, 1891	22	21
Madras, 1891	24	18
India, 1891	18	17
England, 1891		7

187 The proportion of blind has always been very low in Assam in comparison with the rest of the Indian Empire and the last census has proved no exception to the rule. Poverty and the inferior quality of the food which it entails overcrowding in unventilated houses, glare and dust, the irritating smoke given out by smouldering cowdung, malaria and leprosy are amongst the causes which have been suggested as predisposing to this infirmity and from the first four Assam is undoubtedly fairly free. In 1891 it was shown in the Punjab and Madras that the proportion of the blind was as high in the rainy as in the drier portions of those provinces but it is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that glare and dust are largely responsible for the high rate in Upper India, and that Assam has to thank her cloudy skies and luxurious vegetation for her comparative immunity from this affliction.*

Turning to the provincial statistics we find that the infirmity is always more common in the hill districts than in the plains, the rate being 15 for males and 18 for females as compared with 9 and 8 in the two valleys Ophthalmia is, I am told, a very contagious malady and would probably spread rapidly in a hillman's hut and the difficulty of obtaining treatment in the earlier stages of the disease may also have something to do with the matter Blindness is most common in the Naga, Garo and Lushai Hills, and in the first two districts the ratio for women is as high as 25 in 10 000. The least affected districts are, as on the last occasion, Sibsagar and Darrang, where only 5 persons in every 10 000 cannot see. The presence of a large body of immigrants possibly accounts for this fact, as also for the comparatively low ratios in Lakhimpur and Cachar In Goalpara, Kamrup and Sylhet the rate is above the average for the plains, but in Nowgong it is fairly low sinking to 7 in 10 000.

Distribution by sex.

188 Assam forms an exception to the general rule in India, but is in accord with most other countries in having a larger proportion of male than female blind, there being 10 blind men to every 9 blind women in an equal number of the sexes. In the hill districts, however the propor

* Colonel Macnamara, I.M.S., informs me that blindness in Assam is generally due to cataract and ulceration of the cornea, following neglected ophthalmia. The former is usually caused by age, and is therefore not likely to be common in Assam, where the people are certainly not longlived.

tions are reversed, there being 18 afflicted women to 15 men Table II shows how intimate is the connection between blindness and old age Out of 20,000 sightless persons of both sexes, there are only 3,590 below the age of 20, while 6,777 are 60 years or more The number afflicted in middle life is not large, and the proportion of cases of congenital blindness is evidently small, the number below 5 in both sexes being only 673, which is less than in any other age period Table III presents these facts in a still more striking manner Up to 20 the number of blind at each age period to 10,000 of the population does not exceed 5 for either sex From 20 to 50 the ratio varies from 5 to 17 in the case of males and from 3 to 20 amongst women, but at 60 and over it is 82 for the former and 79 for the latter sex

Infirmities

LEPROSY.

189 There has been a decrease in the percentage of cases of leprosy reported, as compared with 1891, but the ratio is still very much higher than that for the Indian Empire in that year, and, as the tendency is to return as leprosy leucoderma, sores and syphilitic ulcerations, the return, for males at any rate, is probably still rather in excess than defect of the actual facts

Number of leprosy in 10 000 of either sex.

	Males	Females.
Assam, 1901	13	4
Assam, 1891	18	6
Bengal, 1891 "	9	3
North-Western Provinces 1891	5	1
Punjab, 1891 "	3	1
Upper Burma, 1891..	10	8
India	7	2½

190 Contrary to what was found to be the case at the last census in other parts of India, the hill districts are singularly free from the disease, the ratio for them being only 6, as compared with 15 in the Surma and 13 in the Brahmaputra Valley (I am referring here to males only, the ratio for females being obviously incorrect) Goalpara still maintains the evil pre-eminence assigned to it at the last two enumerations, the ratio being as high as 21,* the next district in the scale being Sylhet, with a ratio of 15 In Kamrup, the malady seems to have spread during the last ten years, the proportion being 14, as compared with 10 and 7 at the two preceding censuses, but Darrang and Nowgong continue to be comparatively free, and the reduction in the Naga Hills is very noticeable, the figure having fallen from 12 to 3 per 10,000 The enumerators in the latter district are, however, required to distinguish leprosy not only from leucoderma, but also from the affliction known as Naga sores, and as it was generally supposed that many cases of the latter complaint were wrongly included in 1891, it is possible that on the present occasion they fell into the opposite error, and omitted actual cases of leprosy from their books

Distribution in the province

191. It would be superfluous to attempt to suggest any explanations either of the prevalence of leprosy in Assam, as compared with the rest of India, or of the comparative immunity enjoyed by the hill tracts of the province The Leprosy Commission, who enquired fully into the causes and origin of the disease in India in 1890 and 1891, came to the conclusion that leprosy was not diffused by hereditary transmission or, except to an exceedingly small extent, by contagion, that it did not affect any particular race or caste, and that it was not directly originated by the use of any particular article of food nor by any climatic or telluric conditions, nor by insanitary surroundings The causes and origin of the disease having entirely baffled a board of medical experts, it is obviously not to be expected that any further light could be thrown upon the matter by the statistics recorded in one small province It is worthy of note, however, that a decrease in the number of cases reported is, according to the Commissioners, only what one is entitled to expect, as the disease has a natural tendency to die out

Causes of leprosy

192 In 1891, Mr O'Donnel came to the conclusion that leprosy attacks the male sex more frequently or more severely and manifestly than it does the female, but it is by no means likely that the disproportion between the sexes is in reality as great as the figures indicate It is obvious that the conditions of life and the difference in clothing render concealment more possible in the case of females, and the head of the family would naturally be reluctant to admit that any of his womenfolk were afflicted with this loathsome disease The disproportion between the sexes is especially noticeable in Sylhet and Goalpara, where the seclusion of women is more commonly practised than in the rest of the province, the difference between the figures for male and female lepers being 11 per 10,000 in Sylhet and 15 in Goalpara, while in North Cachar and the Naga Hills it sinks to 1 Strangely enough, the disproportion between male and female lepers is

Distribution between the sexes

* Dr Henderson is inclined to think that a large proportion of the cases returned as leprosy are in reality syphilitic ulcerations; syphilis being very prevalent in the Goalpara district

infirmities. least at the earlier stages of life i.e for persons under 25 when the temptation to conceal leprosy amongst females must be at its maximum but the figures are too small to admit of conclusions being drawn from them with any degree of certainty Tables II and III show that the proportion of lepers has a distinct tendency to increase with advancing years. Below 30 the ratio for males does not exceed 13 per 10 000. From 45—60 it is 31 or 32 and over 60 it is as high as 46 per 10,000, and a similar progress in ratio is to be found amongst females, though the actual figures are, *of course, much smaller* Colonel Macnamara *informs me that leprosy has a tendency* to attack the aged and that the disease has a long period of incubation so that it is only natural that it should be most prevalent in the later stages of life.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Average number of afflicted per 10,000 of each sex by districts in 1881, 1891 and 1901

Districts	Insane						Deaf mutes						Blind						Lepers					
	Males			Females			Males			Females			Males			Females			Males			Females		
	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881	1901	1891	1881
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Cachar Plains .. .	5	5	7	4	7	4	9	5	9	5	4	6	8	9	8	9	9	8	11	16	11	5	7	5
Sylhet .. .	4	6	4	3	5	3	8	8	7	5	6	3	11	14	8	9	12	7	15	22	11	4	5	4
Total Surma Valley . .	4	6	4	3	5	3	8	8	7	5	5	3	10	13	8	9	12	7	15	21	11	4	6	4
Goalpara .	8	11	9	8	9	5	11	12	8	10	10	6	13	13	9	14	15	8	21	29	17	6	9	6
Kamrup	4	6	2	2	4	1	5	8	5	3	6	4	12	7	9	8	6	6	14	10	7	3	4	4
Darrang ...	7	8	2	4	5	2	10	15	5	8	14	4	6	5	8	5	5	5	8	12	4	3	6	3
Nowgong	2	3	1	1	3	1	13	10	7	8	9	5	7	7	5	7	6	3	8	13	5	3	5	3
Sibsagar	4	4	3	3	2	1	6	9	8	5	7	4	5	5	5	5	6	2	13	22	12	5	8	5
Lakhimpur	1	3	2	1	3	2	9	12	4	8	13	3	7	7	5	6	6	3	10	19	9	5	8	4
Total Brahmaputra Valley	5	6	4	3	4	2	8	11	7	6	9	5	8	8	7	8	7	5	13	17	9	4	7	4
Total Plains	5	6	4	3	5	3	8	9	7	6	7	4	9	10	8	8	10	6	14	19	10	4	6	4
Lushai Hills . .	29	.		25			16			18			19			17	.		1		.	0 2		
North Cachar .	5	24		4	21		6	12		7	8		5	21	5	19	19	4	7	18	4	6	8	1
Naga Hills	1	6		1	4		49	24		45	17		17	10		25	15		3	12		2	8	
Khasi and Jaintia Hills .	3	6	3	4	4	3	6	12	9	2	9	7	14	11	12	10	11	10	6	6	7	3	4	6
Garo Hills .	4	6		4	7		8	12		6	13		14	31		25	46	.	9	13		5	10	.
Total Hill Districts .	7	7	3	7	6	3	16	15	9	13	12	7	15	17	11	18	21	9	6	10	7	3	7	5
Manipur State	2			1			2	..		1			6		.	4			3			0 9		
Total Province	5	6	4	3	5	3	9	10	7	6	8	4	10	11	8	9	11	6	13	18	10	4	6	4

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Distribution by ages of 10,000 persons for each infirmity

Age period.	Males.					Females.				
	Total	Insane	Deaf mutes.	Blind.	Lepers.	Total.	Insane.	Deaf-mutes.	Blind.	Lepers.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	
1	3	7	5	59	..	24	10	11	44	9
2 ..	10	7	7	20	5	15		16	26	
3 ..	39	27	5	79	5	50	10	60	77	9
4 ...	69	47	43	95	5	99	97	46	103	17
5 ..	97	27	227	8	18	13	87	266	52	35
5	236	15	443	371	33	39	204	499	302	70
10	7 3	399	794	607	135	830	621	1 844	465	252
15	769	835	1 575	555	356	870	795	1,600	483	678
20 ..	692	906	1,234	368	485	846	1,077	1 307	439	861
25 ..	716	1,068	893	515	617	809	1,232	1 182	358	896
3	880	1,198	919	541	957	702	892	792	494	878
35	1,003	1 535	795	614	1,249	852	1,436	737	527	1,287
40	819	1,021	502	469	1 234	610	795	434	535	904
45	969	1,055	524	794	1,381	806	1 038	510	804	1,078
50	583	487	223	578	874	453	417	190	571	626
55	746	541	309	925	924	776	543	325	1,088	974
60	3 7	277	146	407	353	295	213	98	417	400
and over	1 577	473	553	3,256	1,402	1 850	737	482	3 521	1,096

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III

Distribution of infirmities by age among 10,000 of the population.

Age period	Males.					Females.				
	Total afflicted	Insane.	Deaf mutes.	Blind	Lepers.	Total afflicted	Insane.	Deaf-mutes.	Blind	Lepers
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
0—5	6	0 38	3	3	0 28	4	0 44	2	2	0 17
5—10	17	1	10	4	1	12	1	7	3	1
10—15	24	3	12	5	4	20	3	10	5	3
15—20	33	6	14	5	8	22	4	9	5	4
20—25 ...	34	7	10	7	10	19	4	7	3	4
25—30 .	33	6	8	5	13	16	3	5	5	3
30—35	40	8	8	7	17	23	6	5	6	6
35—40 ...	41	7	6	6	22	26	5	5	9	7
40—45 ...	56	8	7	12	28	33	7	6	13	8
45—50	62	7	6	17	32	39	5	4	20	9
50—55	72	7	9	24	31	50	5	6	28	11
55—60	77	9	9	28	31	55	6	5	31	13
90 and over ...	146	6	13	82	46	102	6	7	79	10
Total	36	5	9	10	13	23	3	6	9	4

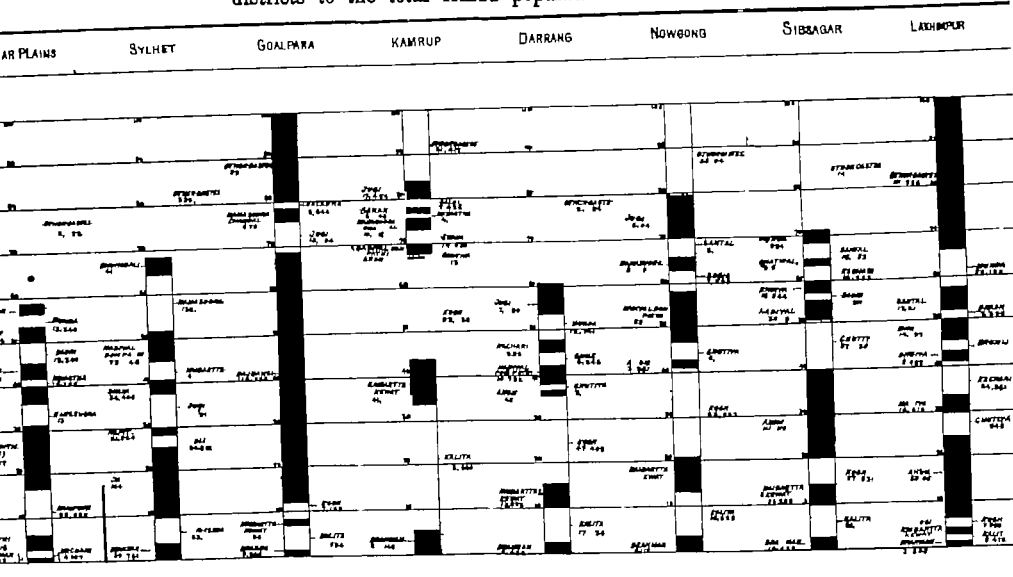
Infirmities.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Proportion of females afflicted to 1 000 males at each age

Age period.	Total afflicted.	Insane.	Deaf-mutes.	Blind.	Lepers.
1		3	4	5	6
0—1	696	1,000	500	667	..
1—2	909	..	1 500	1 167	
2—3 ..	773	250	786	875	500
3—4 ...	870	1,429	692	966	1,000
4—5	697	2 250	790	389	371
0—5 ..	769	1,235	760	726	6 3
5—10 ..	7 0	1,084	694	68	347
10—15	681	672	686	775	557
15—20 ...	736	828	7 3	1,063	518
20—25 ..	680	804	893	6 8	424
25—30	480	479	582	8 2	268
30—35	511	652	627	759	301
35—40 ...	448	543	584	,0 4	214
4 —45	500	686	657	901	228
45—50 ..	467	597	574	88	09
50—55	626	700	550	,046	398
55—60	578	537	45	911	331
60 and over	705	1,086	589	963	228
T tal	601	697	675	890	292

Diagram showing the proportion borne by the Principal Hindu Castes of each of Plains districts to the total Hindu population of the district



CHAPTER XI.

CASTE

Scope of the chapter on caste

193 In the Assam Census Reports for 1881 and 1891, the longest and, to the general reader at any rate, the most interesting chapter is that dealing with the manners and customs of the various tribes and castes of the province Several causes, however, combine to deter me from attempting to follow in the paths of my predecessors The work begun by Mr Stack has been so ably carried on by Mr Gait, that little has been left for me to do, while what little still remains will be treated at greater leisure and in fuller detail than would be suitable in a census report by the Superintendent of Ethnography who has recently been appointed This officer will, however, I presume, confine his attentions to the castes and tribes which are indigenous to the province, and as Assam includes a large number of foreign castes, I have appended to this chapter a brief alphabetical glossary, in which I have endeavoured to explain the meaning to be attached to the various names returned in Table XIII Full accounts of the majority of these castes are to be found in the works of Mr Risley and Mr Crooke, but unfortunately these books do not as a rule form part of the library of a District Officer in Assam, while, even were this not the case, it must, I think, be admitted that it is desirable that a census report should be intelligible in itself, and should not require a reference to other works for the elucidation of its figures

Before it had been definitely decided by the Census Commissioner that the ethnographic matter in the census reports should be reduced to a minimum, certain gentlemen, amongst others Mr Needham, Assistant Political Officer of Sadiya, Captain Kennedy and Mr Noel Williamson of the Naga Hills the Revd P H Moore, of Nowgong, Mr Clark, Subdivisional Officer of Jorhat, and Mr Colquhoun, Subdivisional Officer of North Lakhimpur, had kindly furnished me with interesting accounts of the tribes with which they had been brought in contact, and some apology, I feel, is due for the small extent to which I have been able to make use of their notes The papers have, however, been handed over to the Superintendent of Ethnography, and will no doubt find a more fitting and permanent place in the pages of his work

What is caste?

194 Before describing the various castes in detail, it will not be out of place to consider for a moment the meaning usually assigned to the term Caste may be said to have a two-fold origin, and may be looked upon as being connected either with race or occupation The tendency amongst the natives of the present day is to assume that caste is primarily a matter of function, and this view has met with support from some of the ethnographists of India Messrs Ibbetson, Nesfield, and Risley defined 'caste' at the conference held at Lahore in 1885 as 'the largest group based upon community of occupation,' and this theory has the support of Mr Nesfield, who in his "Brief view of the caste system in the North-West Provinces and Oudh" writes that the bond of sympathy or interest which first drew together the families or tribal fragments of which a caste is composed, and bound them into a new social unit, was not, as some writers have alleged, community of creed or community of kinship, but community of function Similar views have been expressed by Mr Crooke in "The tribes and castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh" (page cxxxix)

We have thus, mainly on the evidence of anthropometry, endeavoured to establish the fact that, as we find the existing population, the theory of the ethnological basis of caste must to a great extent be abandoned We have, then, to search for some other solution of the question of the origin of our present castes This can only be found in community of function or occupation

and by Mr O'Donnell in Bengal, but Mr Baines and Mr Risley have held that, though caste is to some extent connected with occupation, it has also a racial origin *

Caste in the Assam Valley racial.

195 I have laid stress on the fact that caste is not necessarily connected with occupation, because we find that in Assam Proper it is almost entirely a matter of race It is true that functional castes are not absolutely unknown The Hira is said to be a Chandal who became a

* But granting that there is some thing inherent as it were, in the conditions of life in India that forces the sentiment of which the caste system is the expression, and granting again that the forms or collection of forms that this expression has taken is the outgrowth of the Brahmanic creed it seems within the bounds of reasonable hypothesis to attribute to the present development an origin distinctly racial Indian census of 1891 Central Report, page 183.

Caste.

potter and the Mukhi a Koch degraded for burning lime, and there are functional sub divisions of the main castes such as the Kumar Nat and Bej Kalita, the Jaliya Mali and Teli Kewat but the castes themselves are apparently racial in origin Who and what the Kalitas originally were is still a matter of doubt but the most plausible theory put forward is that they were the descendants of the early Aryan invaders who entered Assam before the various professions had crystallised into castes The Koch and Rajbansi are race castes the Kaibartta or Kewat seem to have been originally a tribe occupying a commanding position in the delta of Bengal and the Doms accord ing to Mr Risley belong to one of the races whom for convenience of expression we may call the abongines of India. The same explanation must probably be given of the origin of the Chandal or Namasudra while the Bora, a caste peculiar to the Assam Valley is composed of the offspring of Brahman and Garak widows and their descendants and is a living example at the present day of the castes of mixed parentage which Manu used as a device to explain the presence of abongmal tribes in the Hindu social system To these we might perhaps add the Ahom and the Chutiya. At the last census the Chutiya were included under the category of forest and hill tribes, and the Ahoms were classified as a non Indian Asiatic race;[1] but as more than six centuries have now elapsed since the last named tribe entered Assam and as both they and the Chutiya have long been converts to Hinduism it seems doubtful whether like the Koch and the Rajbansi, they should not be allowed to take rank as a Hindu caste.*

The racial origin of caste in the Assam Valley has been clearly stated by Mr Gait in the report for 1891 from which I quote the following passage

Now what is the pr sent positio f cast i the Brahmaputra V lley? W have the Brahma and the Kalita, and w ha also the diff t race castes that is t say we have the castes of Manu, except that the Kalita takes the place f th Kshettriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The modern professi castes, which have taken the place of the Kshettriya, Vaisya and Sudra in other parts of I dia, ar none of them fou d here. There are of course gard ers, barbers potters, blacksmiths etc., but the persons follow g these occupations do ot consit t separate castes. The oilman is ge erally K wat, the potter a Kalita a K wat, or a Chandal; the barber is usually a kalita, and so for ll th rest. The professio castes are non-existant.

Occupation in fact can in no way explain caste at the present day in the Valley of the Brahmaputra In the first place the occupation of the majority of castes is agri culture, and as far as their manner of life goes there is nothing to distinguish the Kalita, the Kewat and the Bor Koch or for the matter of that the Saloa and the Shaha; while community of occupation by no means implies community of caste or equality of status. The Kumar Kalita and the Hira are both potters but they are widely separated in the social scale and the Jaliya Kewat even when he is still a fisherman, will not intermarry with the Nadiyal In the same way in theory at any rate a caste or sub-caste does not rise, even when it abandons the occupation which is the source of its degradation. The Jaliya Kewat remains a Jaliya Kewat, though he can claim several generations of cultiva ting ancestors, and the status of the Brittial Bamyas remains low in spite of the fact that they have availed themselves largely of the advantages afforded by modern education.

Difference between Assam and Bengal in caste matters.

196 No less than 83 per cent. of the persons shown in the Assam scheme of precedence are members of undoubted race castes † and it is by no means certain whether all of the remainder are functional In Assam Proper in fact the whole of the Hindu social system is very different from that found in Bengal. Caste has been said to be a generic term, usually referring to tradi tional occupation, which links together a large and heterogeneous group of sub-castes, the members of which cannot intermarry and do not usually eat together the whole organization being one of extreme complexity and including a large number of connubial groupings but this description would hardly apply to the Valley of the Brahmaputra. I have already shown that in Assam Proper caste as a rule is racial and not functional and in matters matrimonial we also find that what holds good of other parts of India is not applicable here

Even in Sylhet which follows the usages of Bengal more closely than Assam there is no Kulinism amongst the Brahmans and the endogamous sections such as Rarhi, Barendra and Baidik are unknown and though there are *mels* to which some of the best Brahman families belong, they are not endogamous groups. The restrictions on marriage are, indeed so much relaxed that even clearly defined castes like the Kayastha and Baidya intermarry and wealthy Shahas and Dases are allowed to buy brides and bridegrooms from the higher castes without the parents losing their position in society

1 Subsequent at the last census certain Kacharis wanted to be returned, not as Kochs, the caste usually favoured by the Kachari converts in Lower Assam, but as Ahoms.

† Kalita, Kewat and Kaibartta, Koch, Rajbansi, Ahom, Chutiya, Bora Nadiyal and Chandal.

It is true that the Brahmans observe the rules of exogamy based upon the *gotra*, but as the majority of the lower classes all belong to the same *gotra* (in Assam Kasyapa and in Sylhet Alimyan), the whole object of the institution is entirely lost In Assam Proper the boundary line between the various castes is not very clearly defined, and it is quite conceivable that a Kachari family might in the course of generations rise through the various stages of Koch, Kewat and Kalita into a full-blown Kayastha Caste

Another point that is noticeable in the caste system of the Assam Valley is the high position enjoyed by castes which in Bengal occupy a comparatively low place in the social scale The Ganak ranks only a little below the Brahman, and if we leave out of consideration the few genuine Assamese Kayasthas, the next caste is the Kalita, who make no pretence to be twice-born, and whose profession is agriculture The Shaha's water is taken by Brahmans, and the Doms, to use the name by which they have been known for centuries, are a respectable fishing caste, who have never, as far as I am aware, consented to undertake the unsavoury duties assigned to the Doms in Bengal The Mahapurushia sect was founded by a Kayastha and in many Sattras the Gosain is still a member of the Kayastha or Kalita caste The same phenomenon, though in a less pronounced form, is to be found in the Surma Valley The water of the Halwa Das is taken by Brahmans, and their position in the material world is so good that they claim to rank above the Nabasakh, while the Shahas are in possession of considerable wealth and influence In the whole province, in fact, Hinduism is imbued with a spirit of liberality, and is free from many of the less attractive characteristics which are found in other parts of India Child marriage is rare amongst the Assamese, and women who have lost their husbands are seldom condemned to a life of perpetual widowhood

Tendency to level upwards.

197 But the main tendency amongst Hindu castes, which is disclosed at each successive census, is the tendency to level upwards, and the refusal of those at the bottom of the social scale to acquiesce in the humble positions assigned to them In the Assam Valley, the Kayasthas and Kalitas are putting forward claims to take precedence of the Ganaks The Kalita, who has reached a position in which it is no longer necessary for him to drive the plough, calls himself a Kayastha, the Dom is no longer contented with the name Nadiyal, and wishes to be called a Jahya Kaibartta, and the Kewat, in fear of being confounded with the Nadiyal, styles himself a Maheshya Vaisya The Hari returns himself as Brittial Baniya, and denies all connection with the sweeper caste, the Jugi poses as one of the twice-born, and even the upper class of the Ahoms, as to whose racial affinities there can be little or no doubt, wish to be called Daityakul Kshatriyas In the Surma Valley, the Halwa Das repudiate the prefix Halwa as suggesting an unduly close connection with agriculture, and the Shaha calls himself a Baidya or Kayastha

This tendency, though liable, if carried much further, to destroy the whole system of caste, is only natural The Assamese Dom resembles the Jahya Kaibartta in his manners and customs he is a devout Hindu, who is rising in the world, and there is nothing strange in his objecting to a caste name which, to a foreigner, might suggest that he is connected with a degraded body of scavengers The Brittial Baniya who has become a clerk in a Government office not unnaturally resents any suggestion that he is descended from a sweeper, and the wealthy and educated Shaha, who has no connection with trade in any form, declines to look upon himself as a degraded seller of wine

Castes arranged in order of precedence

198 Appended to this chapter will be found two tables showing the main indigenous castes of the Assam and Surma Valleys arranged in order of precedence I have divided them into three groups, showing (*a*) twice-born castes who, according to Hindu ideas, are not degraded, (*b*) clean Sudra castes, from whose hands Brahmans usually take water, and (*c*) castes who are not included in the latter category Within each table I have arranged the castes in the rank which, as far as I can ascertain, is assigned to them by popular opinion This is a point upon which I desire to lay some stress. I have made no attempt to go behind general opinion, or to consider the grounds upon which it is based The tables, therefore, do not profess to represent what should be the position of the castes in the Hindu social system if all the facts were known, but the position which, as far as I can ascertain, is generally assigned to them by their co-religionists In the case of the lower castes, I have taken the opinion of the better castes as final, as there does not appear to be any reason why a Brahman should, to take one case as an example, desire to exalt the Nadiyal at the expense of the Brittial Baniya Where the higher castes such as the Ganak, are concerned, I have looked rather to the opinion of the lower classes than to that of the upper, as the Kalitas and Kayasthas in Assam would obviously be

Caste not altogether impartial judges, and even the Brahmans might conceivably be jealous of the pretensions of a caste immediately below them

I further feel it necessary to point out that the lists appended to this chapter have no binding force upon any one. *From some of the memorials that have been* received it might be imagined that the Government of Assam had assumed the functions of Ballal Sen, and had undertaken to definitely fix the position of the various Hindu castes. This can obviously only be done by the leaders of the Hindu community and any erroneous impressions that I may have received cannot affect the real position of the caste concerned in any way

Two more points require notice. Many of the castes, *e g* the Kalita, Kewat and Koch have subdivisions which rank below the main caste, and which would sometimes fall even in another group These sub-castes have not however been recorded separately in the census tables, and have therefore been ignored in the scheme of precedence. The Koch has been shown in group II because Brahmans take water from the hands of the Bor Koch but the expression includes such sub-castes as the Madahi and the Sarania, who rank but little above the Kachari

The position of other castes varies in different districts *e.g.*, the Patia has been placed above the Kewat in Nowgong but below him elsewhere. In these cases I *have followed the grouping of the district in which the majority of the caste is found.*

Little exception can I think be taken to the order of groups I and II Nobody probably would dispute the fact that the Kayastha takes precedence of the Kalita, *the Kalita of the Kewat and the Kewat of the Koch. I have placed the Patia above* the Kewat, because this is the position assigned to that caste in Nowgong which is the only district in which it is found in any appreciable numbers and for the same reason I have placed the Saloi above and the Shaha below the Koch in accordance with the recommendation of the Kamrup committee. With group III I have had more difficulty The Ahoms enjoy a very good position in Sibsagar where, till comparatively recently they were the ruling race, but as Brahmans do not as a rule, take water from their hands, I have included them in the last group. The Ahom gentry lay claim to the title of Kshatriya, a claim which if admitted would place them above the Kayastha but the claims to the title of Kshatriya made by aboriginal tribes in Assam can hardly I think, be taken seriously The Chutiya again are a race caste, and it is, therefore, a little difficult to fix their position, but I have been given to understand that the Hindu and Ahom Chutiyas at any rate, take precedence of the Juga. The Brittial Bamyas do not acquiesce in the low position assigned to them, but, as far as I can ascertain there can be little doubt that popular opinion places them below the Nadiyals. I have naturally made no attempt to classify foreign castes in any order of precedence; and the castes for which details are given in the *list only represent 65 per cent. of the Hindu population of the Assam Valley Group I forms 3·8 per cent.* group II 36 3 per cent., and group III 25·6 per cent of the Hindus in the Brahmaputra Valley

The scheme of precedence for the Surma Valley calls for few remarks. I have bracketted the Baidya and Kayastha, as the two castes intermarry though I gather that the general opinion of persons other than Kayasthas is that the Baidya is slightly the more aristocratic of the two The Das, with whom I include the Halwa Das, claim to rank above the Nabasakh and immediately below the Kayastha; but though this caste includes no doubt a large number of wealthy and influential men, their claim to rank above the Nabasakh is not as far as I can learn admitted by other Hindu castes; and I am told that according to strict Hindu ideas, the Das should come immediately after the Sudra, as Srotriya Brahmans will not, as a rule, serve as their priests. From the purely material point of view the Das should possibly take precedence, even of the Nabasakh as they are a numerous and apparently an influential community; but in a matter of this kind these considerations have little or no weight. The Ganaks and Barna Brahmans I have placed in group III as Srotriya Brahmans do not take water from their hands in Sylhet. 3 3 per cent of the Hindus in the Surma Valley fall in group I 28 per cent. in group II and 40 per cent. in group III

Comparison between the caste system of Assam and the traditional theory of castes.

100 From the preceding paragraphs it appears that the caste system of the *Assam Valley has some points of resemblance with the social* organization of the primitive Hindus. According to Mr Romesh Chander Dutt in the Epic Period, which he places between B C *14000* and B C 1000 the body of the people (except the priests and soldiers) still formed one united Vaisya caste, and had not been disunited into such miserably-divided communities as in the modern day The body of the people were still entitled to religious knowledge and learning, and to perform religious rites for themselves just like Brahmans and Kshatriyas. And even intermarriage

between Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas was allowed under certain restrictions"* The same authority informs us that the descendants of a member of one caste might enter another by following the profession of the latter, and that there were numerous instances of men of low birth, but of exceptional wisdom and virtue, becoming members even of the priestly caste In the rationalistic period (B C 1000 to B C 242), the constitution of the four main castes had become more rigid, and it was no longer possible for members of the other castes to become Brahmans, but the professions had not yet crystallised into castes Even in the time of Yajnavalkya (circa fourth or fifth century A D), caste appears to be a racial organisation, and it is only towards the close of the Pauranik period, *i e*, about the tenth century A D, that some of the lower professions were beginning to be formed into castes The caste system of Bengal is, in fact, a comparatively modern growth, and Assam, which, for the most part, has been under the rule of non-Aryan dynasties, has escaped the baleful influences of the reforming Hindu kings The profession castes are still in the process of formation, and we have the clean Sudra castes, like the Kalita and Kewat, who take the place of the Vaisyas of tradition, and the aboriginal tribes who are being converted to Hinduism The clean Sudra castes are not, of course, as homogeneous a group as were the Vaisyas, but the barriers between them are not as impassable as elsewhere, and they are not split up into the numerous endogamous sub-groups, which are found in other parts of India The Hindus of Assam have lived under non-Hindu rulers, they have been called upon to absorb foreign races into their system, and the consequence is that their social system has remained fresh and elastic, and still suited for the needs of a living people

Caste.

The orthodox Bengali is perhaps inclined to look down upon the Assamese Hindu, and to regard him as unpardonably lax in the observance of his religion, but this laxity is to all seeming much more in accordance with the practice of the early Aryans than the minute subdivisions of the social system, and the rigid barriers interposed between one man and another which are found in other parts of India, and which, after all, are apparently a product of a later and less wholesome and vigorous age

The same can be said, though to a lesser degree, of the Surma Valley, for though the profession castes are found in Sylhet, the system, as a whole, is not so rigid as that of Bengal Kayasthas and Baidyas intermarry, the Das or Halwa Das are admitted into the category of castes from whose hands a Brahman can take water, and public opinion tolerates the giving in marriage of Kayastha girls and boys to persons of lower castes

Settlement of coolie castes in the province

200 Provincial Table V analyses the racial constitution of the tea-garden population, and throws some light on the extent to which coolies are settling in the province In Part I, I have shown the village and urban population of certain castes which are not indigenous to the province, and which there can, I think, be little doubt have been brought to Assam to work on tea-gardens, and from this it appears that there are now living in the villages of the Surma Valley and the five upper districts of the Valley of the Brahmaputra 141,152 persons, who are either garden coolies or their descendants, while 7,011 of these castes were censused in towns In Lakhimpur 15 1 of the village population are members of these castes, in Sibsagar 8 6, in the Cachar Plains 7 8, and in Darrang 7 4 In Sylhet there are no less than 18,830 coolies in the villages, though they form only 1·1 per cent of the village population.

	Number of coolie castes in villages	Percentage on village population
Cachar Plains	21 748	7 8
Sylhet* ..	18 830	1 1
Surma Valley	40 578	2 1
Kamrupt ..	2 432	0 5
Darrang ...	18 023	7 4
Nowgong	8 047	3 4
Sibsagar ..	37 149	8 6
Lakhimpur ...	31 023	15 1
Brahmaputra Valley	100 574	6·3
Total ..	141 152	4·0

* Excluding Sunamganj
† Excluding Barreta

It is obviously impossible to decide exactly what castes are, and what are not, mainly composed of garden coolies, but in cases of doubt I have as a rule decided against the coolie, and the number of persons improperly classified under this head is, I think, but small Some mistakes have no doubt been made, but the number of persons wrongly included must have been more than counterbalanced by the number of those improperly omitted from the return The following castes have been censused upon gardens in comparatively large numbers — Dhobi and Dhoba (3,931), Gorla (16,390), Kamar (6,008), Kumhar (3,238), Manjhi (4,055), Tanti (16,112), Teli (6,854), and it is, I think, practically certain that some of the persons in the villages, who have returned themselves under these caste names, must have been ex-garden coolies, but I have omitted them from the return, as in the case of these castes it was impossible to distinguish between the native and the foreigner Mathematical accuracy in a matter of this kind is obviously out of

* Ancient India, Volume I, page 239

Caste.

the question, but we should probably not be far wrong in assuming that Assam was indebted to the tea industry for between 145,000 and 150,000 of its village population on the census night

Animistic tribes of Assam.

201. It remains to consider whether it is possible to classify the Animistic tribes of the province. To the most casual observer the Assam range must be an object of interest. At the western extremity we find the Garos, in the centre the Khasis and at the eastern end the Nagas and, as these three races differ not only from one another but also from the great bulk of the inhabitants of the two valleys into which the range abuts one cannot but wonder how they ever reached the localities in which we find them. Another point which must strike any one who examines the caste statistics of the province is the extraordinary number of aboriginal races enumerated in Assam. Living in the hills on the north of the Brahmaputra we find the Mishmis the Abors the Mins, the Daflas and the Akas. In the plains at the foot there are the Kacharis Rabhas, and Meches; in Nowgong the Mikirs, Lalungs and Hojais, in the Assam range the Garos the Khasis the Kukis and the Nagas It would be a mistake, however to imagine that because these tribes are called by separate names they must therefore of necessity be separate races. The names by which we know these people are not as a rule, the names which they use amongst themselves, but are titles given to them by the Assamese and it is obvious that different people in different places are likely to call the same thing by different names The Abors, Mins and Daflas are closely allied to one another and are probably connected with the great Bodo race to which the Kachari, Rabha, Mech, Garo and Tippera, and probably the Mikir and Lalung, belong The linguistic affinities of the Khasi language suggest that its speakers are the remains of a different wave of emigrants the majority of whom are now to be found in Annam and Cambodia though whether the Khasis are an off shoot left by the horde on its way south, or sections who were forced north again when the main body reached the sea, seems uncertain while it is from the south and east that the various Naga and Kuki tribes have apparently come.

In a note, with which I have been favoured by Dr Grierson, he observes that North Western China between the upper waters of the Yang tse-kiang and the Ho-ang ho was the traditional cradle of the Indo-Chinese race, and that from this starting point successive waves of emigrants entered Assam and India. The first to arrive were the Mon-Anam who are now found in Annam and Cambodia, but who have left a colony in Assam in the shape of the Khasis. A second wave of emigration brought the Tibeto-Burmans, the ancestors of the Bodo tribe, who colonised the valley of the Brahmaputra and occupied the Garo Tipperah and a portion at any rate of the Naga Hills. Another branch came southwards down the Chindwin settled in the Chin Hills, and were compelled by the pressure of population to move northwards into Cachar Manipur and even into the Assam range

It cannot be pretended that this description of the successive waves of Tibeto-Burman immigration can lay claim to historical or scientific accuracy and it seems doubtful whether the Naga is as closely allied to the Kachari as the Lalung or Garo The head hunting instincts of the tribes that inhabit the Naga Hills suggests a connection with the races of the Malay Peninsula and tends to differentiate them from the members of the Bodo family amongst whom, as far as I am aware, the custom is unknown even to tradition. It is true that the Kacharis have been the subjects of a more or less civilised Government for centuries, but head hunting is not practised, even by the tribes who live in the hills to the north of the Brahmaputra, and who are still in a condition of freedom in which their natural instincts can have full play The custom is of such a striking character that we should I think, be almost justified in drawing a provisional distinction at any rate, between tribes that take heads and those which do not; and I should thus be inclined to place the Animistic tribes of the sub-Himalayan Hills the Brahmaputra Valley and the Garo* and Tipperah Hills in one group the Khasis and Syntengs in another and the Kukis and Lushars in a third in which I should be disposed to include the Naga tribes. Such a classification is, of course, purely tentative, and will very probably be modified by the ethnographic survey of the province, but taking it for what it is worth, it appears that of the tribes 60 per cent. fall in the first group 15 in the second and 25 in the third.†

Difficulties in connection with the presentation of the caste tables.

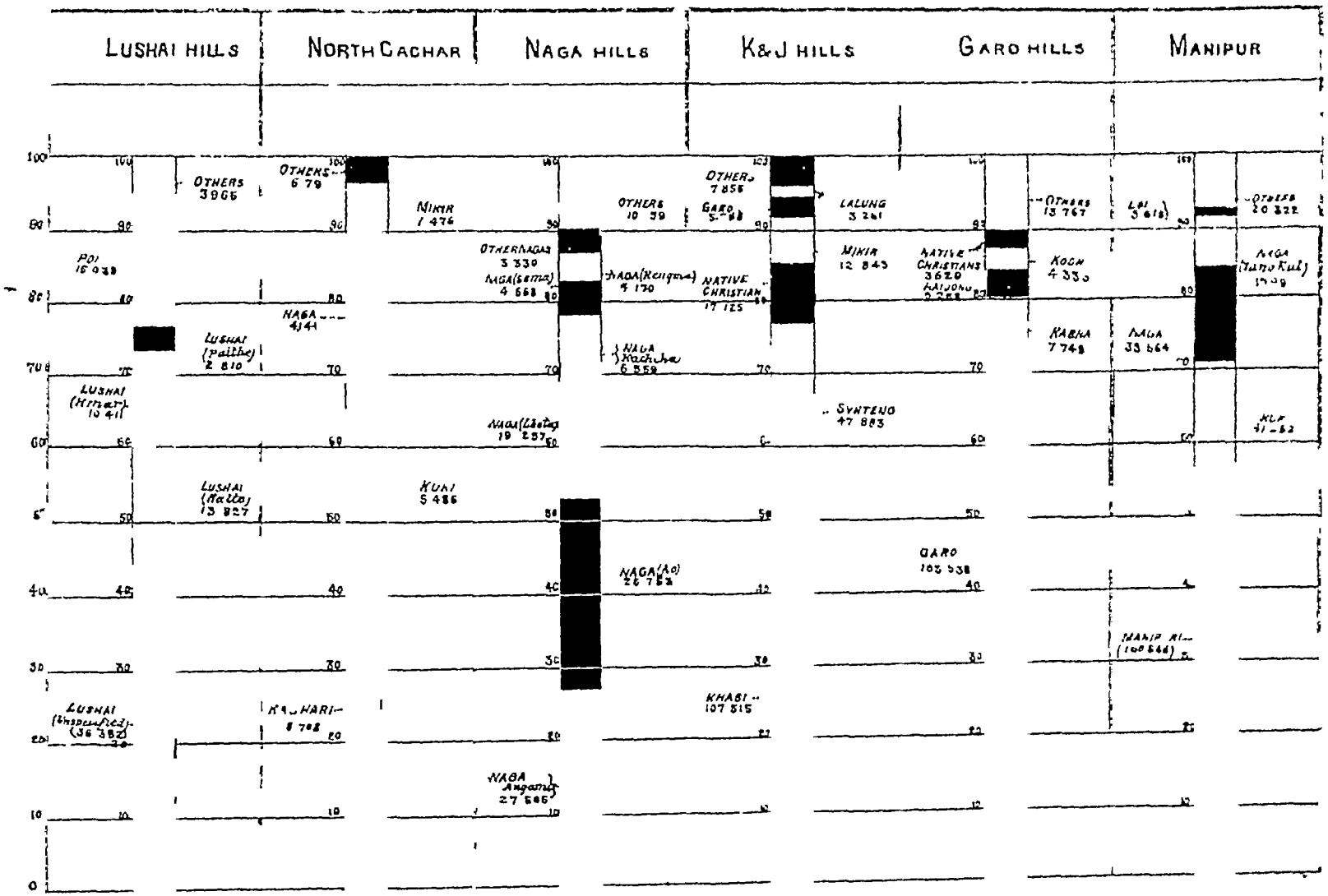
202. Before passing on to an examination of the caste statistics, it would be as well to refer briefly to the difficulties under which the table has been compiled As far as the natives of the province were themselves concerned, we had but little trouble. The number of sub-castes amongst the

* According to Colonel Dalton, the Garos used to kill Bengali and preserve his skull on the occasion of the funeral of their chiefs, but this is not quite the same as head-hunting

† A large number of Christians in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills have been treated as Khasis and Garos respectively

Diagram showing the proportion borne by the main tribes to the total population of the Hill districts and Manipur.

(In the North Cachar Hills the railway population has been excluded.)



Assamese is small, and such subdivisions as do exist were well known to the enumerators, so that the only difficulty with which they were confronted was in regard to low caste persons, who endeavoured to get themselves returned as members of castes of higher rank in the Hindu social system But when it came to the enumeration of the foreigners, it was a very different matter Most of the castes are split up into sub-castes, and in a large number of cases it was a sub-caste or a title, and not the caste that was entered in the schedule The labour of classifying these sub-castes under their proper heads was very great and in many cases, as the name returned was equally applicable to several main castes, it was impossible to make certain that the classification was correct The spelling of these foreign names was an additional source of confusion The caste was entered on the schedule by the enumerator as he thought it ought to be spelt, copied by another man who not unfrequently had never heard of the name that he was copying, and finally entered by the sorter on his ticket, with the inevitable result that in a certain number of cases the name which appeared upon the sorter's ticket was not the name of any known caste, tribe, race or profession The mere sorting of the names returned was also a most tedious and trying operation, as can be judged from the fact that no less than 460 caste names were found in a box containing 11,456 Hindu slips Caste

These numerous difficulties have, however, affected the accuracy of the caste table less seriously than might at first be supposed Although the number of cases in which we were puzzled to know what was meant was large, there were, as a rule, only one or two persons returned under the ambiguous entry, so that the total number of persons affected by these mistakes was small, and the entries for all the castes of any numerical importance can be accepted without hesitation as correct

ALPHABETICAL GLOSSARY.

[NOTE —Castes which are indigenous are marked as follows —(S) when indigenous to Surma Valley only (A) when indigenous to Assam Valley or the Hill Districts, (P) when indigenous to both Valleys]

Abor (A) —A tribe inhabiting the hills to the north of Sadiya between the Dihong and the Sesseri, whose violations of our territory necessitated a punitive expedition in 1894 They are divided into numerous clans, but, unlike the majority of hillmen, act together in all matters affecting the general welfare of the tribe Colonel Dalton quotes with disapproval the theory that the Abors are connected with the Mishmis, but thinks that they are the same people as the Hill Miris, Daflas and Akas, though in personal appearance at any rate they differ very materially from the last-named clan I have received an interesting account of the Padam Abors from Mr F J Needham, C I E, which I only refrain from publishing, as it will be more in place in the ethnographic survey of the province

208 Abor (A)	
1901	321
1891	223

Agaria —A cultivating caste found in the tributary *mahals* of Chota Nagpur Colonel Dalton describes them as being tall and well made, with Aryan features and tawny complexions The majority of the persons censused in the province were working on tea gardens in Sylhet and Sibsagar

Agaria	
1901	518
1891	573

Agarwal —A wealthy trading caste of Upper India, who claim to represent the Vaisyas of Manu, 4,003 of this caste were censused in the Brahmaputra Valley, where they are known under the generic term of 'Kayah'

Agarwal	
1901	4 182
1891	2,325

Agrahari —A trading caste of Upper India Twenty-five females were censused in Cachar, the men apparently having been returned under some other name

Agrahari	
1901	28
1891	6

Ahir —This name indicates either a section of Ghasis or a sub-caste of Goalas, but there is nothing to show to which caste these Ahirs belonged In 1891 the sub-caste, as well as the caste, was returned, and it was thus possible to classify these people under their proper head Seven thousand one hundred and sixty-five Ahirs were censused on tea gardens, and the majority were probably Ghasis (*q v*)

Ahir	
1901	8 929
1891	0

Ahom (A) —The Ahoms are the descendants of a Shan tribe who entered Assam in the 13th century, and, after overthrowing the Chutiya and Koch kingdoms, became rulers of the Brahmaputra Valley The Ahoms are divided into three sections,—the Chamuas, or gentry, the Khelias, or functional sections, and the Meluns, or servants of the royal family These sections are not endogamous, though there is a natural tendency for men to take wives from families in their own rank of life, and intermarriage between certain Chamua families, such as the Handikoi and the Pakimara is prohibited for reasons

Ahom (A)	
1901	178 040
1891	173 525
1881	170,314

Caste. which are not very clear The Khelas were originally purely functional groups, the *khels* being formed by the selection of men of various families to whom special occupations were assigned. The figures in the margin show the distribution of Aboms by districts As is only natural the great majority are to be found in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur for though their kingdom included at one time the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley they never colonised Central and Lower Assam The provincial enumerations fluctuate in a rather curious manner In 1891 there was a great decrease which Mr Gait explained as being—

	1901.	1891.
Darrang	4,184	1,139
Kamrup	3,114	1,187
Sibsagar	117,774	97,456
Lakhimpur	52,145	46,570
Other districts	1,043	783
Province	178,049	153,935

Partly to be attributed to the gradual disappearance of the Aboms as a distinctive race and partly to the additional caste col mn having rendered it possible to classify under the proper head persons of other tribes who returned themselves as Aboms in the main caste column. There is, for instance a sept of Chutiyas called Abom Ch tiyas and Thengal kacharis and Moranas also often claim to be Aboms. I 1881 when there was only one column for caste it is possible that some of these appeared as Aboms. B t the first cause is doubtless the main one

As compared with the previous census the Aboms have increased by 15 9 per cent., and the figures closely approach those of 1881 A large part of this increase is no doubt due to natural growth but this can hardly be the only explanation, nor can the increase which has occurred in Lakhimpur and which amounts to no less than 26 per cent be altogether explained by the assumption that owing to the absence of a second caste column, a certain number of Kacharis and Chutiyas have on the present occasion been returned as Aboms. The figures afford a good instance of the difficulty of obtaining a really accurate return of caste.

I. Aiton (A)—A small section of the Shan tribe, who are said to have supplied eunuchs for the royal seraglios. They have not yet attorned to Hinduism and like the Noras and Phakiyals, are still Buddhists. Only one Aiton was censused outside Sibsagar Some of them have possibly been returned as Shans

1901	98
1891	108

Aka (A)—A small and independent tribe occupying the hills to the north of Tezpur between Towang and the Bhorelli. Colonel Dalton considers them to be closely allied to the Daflas, Miris and Abors, but they differ from them considerably in appearance. They are more cleanly than the Daflas and the young men often have a remarkably effeminate appearance looking like rather pretty girls. In spite of this they are warlike and independent They evidently have trade relations with Thibet as their chiefs wear the flowered silk robes and curious enamelled hats obtainable in that country As far as I am aware no Akas have settled in the plains.

1901	99
1891	74

Amat.—According to Mr Risley a cultivating caste of Behar many of whom are employed as personal servants. The seven Amats censused in Goalpara probably came to the province in that capacity

1901	13
1891	6

Asura.—A small non Aryan tribe of Lohardaga, who in their own country are smelters of iron 364 were censused on tea gardens.

1901	1,[illegible]
1891	815

Atit.—This term may indicate either a religious mendicant or a guest. The majority of Atits censused in the province were females.

1901	47
1891	31

Babhan.—The origin of this caste is not quite clear One set of legends connects them with Brahmans but Mr Risley is of opinion that they are probably a branch of the Rajputs. In Behar their social status is good but it is apparently only the poorer members of the caste who come to Assam as 171 were censused on tea gardens.

1901	890
1891	781

Badyakar (P)—A functional title used by persons of several castes, who play on drums on ceremonial and festive occasions. The persons who returned themselves under this head were probably Dom Patnis or Nadiyals, but the same sub-caste is found amongst the Muchis and Haris. In 1891 the second column made it possible to refer these people to their proper head

1901	250
1891	0

Bagdi.—According to Mr Risley a cultivating fishing and menial caste of Central and Western Bengal who appear to be of Dravidian descent They rank low in the social scale with Bauns and Bhuiyas, and indulge freely in flesh and liquor; 7 061 out of the total number enumerated were censused on tea gardens.

1901	9,109
1891	6,644

Baidya (S)—The physician caste, who are said to be the same as the *Ambastha* of Manu *i.e.*, the offspring of a Brahman father and Vaisya

1901	5,184

apparently take precedence even of Kayasthas In Bengal they wear the sacred thread, but this is not as yet the practice in Sylhet, and they observe, like Sudras, thirty days *asaucha* (impurity after birth or death) The great majority of the Baidyas are found in Sylhet, where they intermarry with Kayasthas They abstain from all manual labour

Caste

Bairagi (P) —A term indicating a religious mendicant, generally devoted to the worship of Vishnu, who may be of any caste Most of those enumerated were censused in Sylhet

1901 .. .. .. 3 270
1891 .. .. .. 4 803

Baniya (P) —The term has a wide connotation, and, properly speaking, is not a caste name at all Those returned in Kamrup were probably Sonars, who are natives of the province, and the name is also used by Gandhabaniks in Sylhet, and by foreigners who trade in grain and other articles

1901 .. .. .. 4 440
1891 3,145

Barhi —Theoretically, the carpenter caste of Behar, but many of its members have taken to agriculture, and those found in the province have apparently come there as garden coolies, 195 having been censused on tea estates In Behar Brahmans will take water from their hands

1901 278
1891 410

Barna Brahman (P) —Under the term Barna Brahman, I have included the priests of those castes to whom a good Brahman declines to minister These persons are either genuine Brahmans, who have been degraded, or members of the caste they serve, who by a fiction have been created Brahmans The return of such a caste is obviously most unreliable, and in many cases the qualifying epithet Barna has been omitted, the deficiency being most conspicuous in the Assam Valley

1901 .. 3 144
1891 .. 5 608

Barnasankar —The term Barnasankar is applied to the offspring of illicit intercourse between the members of different castes It was only reported from the Surma Valley

1901 6
1891 0

Barui (S) —The Barui are cultivators of the betel vine, and their pan gardens are to be seen on the banks of many of the rivers in the Sylhet district, which contains eight-ninths of the total number enumerated at the census The Baruis are members of the Nabasakh, and have a Srotriya Brahman as their priest, but they are not contented with their position, and endeavour to get themselves entered as Kayasthas, a fact which no doubt explains the decrease in their numbers In 1881, they were so successful in concealing their real caste that only 4,429 were returned in the whole province

1901 .. .. 18 488
1891 .. .. .. 22 581

Bauri —A cultivating caste of Western Bengal of non-Aryan origin Their social status is very low, and, according to Mr Risley, they eat beef, pork and fowls, and are much addicted to strong drink They are employed as coolies in Assam, 35,473 of them having been censused on the tea plantations

1901 .. .. 42 473
1891 .. .. 32 149

Bediya —It is obviously impossible to be certain whether the persons returned under this name are Bedias or Bediyas The Bedias are a small agricultural tribe of Chota Nagpur, who are supposed to be connected with the Kurmis The majority of the people returned under this head were censused in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, and were probably Bedias Bediya, according to Mr Risley, is the generic name of a number of vagrant gipsy-like groups

1901 .. .. .. 1 722
1891 .. .. .. 1 062

Behara —A title of Bagdis, Bauris, Chandals, Kahars, and others The absence of a second column for caste rendered it impossible to ascertain the true caste of the persons returned under this name

1901 27
1891 0

1891 225
1901 .. .. .. 0 **Bej** —Possibly a synonym for Bediya

Beldar —An earth-working caste of Behar and Western Bengal They are akin to the Nunias, but will only carry the earth in baskets balanced on the head, 247 were censused on tea-gardens

1901 321
1891 573

1901 100
1891 .. .. .. 91 **Besya (P)** —A title of prostitutes, used in Sylhet and Goalpara

1901 157
1891 .. .. .. 0 **Bhakta** —A title of Sunris and Kaibarttas It was only returned from Sibsagar

1901 55
1891 .. .. .. 48 **Bhandari (S)** —A title applied to indoor servants in Sylhet, where 54 of the Bhandaris were censused

Bhangi —The sweeper caste of Hindustan, 7 were censused in the North Cachar Hills, to which place they had been imported by the railway authorities

1901 7
1891 0

Caste.

Bhar—A small Dravidian caste of Western Bengal and Chota Nagpur 10,465 were censused on the tea gardens of the province the great majority being found in the Surma Valley Their social status seems to be a little higher than that of the majority of coolie castes, and according to Mr Risley in Manbhum the higher castes take water from their hands.

1901 — — — 10,465
1891 — — — 8,308

Bhat (S)—A respectable caste ranking above the Kayastha, whose traditional occupation is that of genealogist and family bard In Sylhet they claim to be Kshatriyas and a certain number have probably returned themselves under that name; but though Brahmans will take their water they will not take food cooked by them. Very few Bhats were censused outside the Sylhet district

1901 — — — 1,922
1891 — — — 1,371

Bhatiya.—A term applied in Goalpara, to down river Muhammadans who come to Assam to trade.

1901 — — — 1,022
1891 — — — 488

Bhil.—A Dravidian race of Central India, the majority of whom were found in the Surma Valley

Bhuinhar—A title of Bhumij Mundas and Oraons. It is impossible to *say to which of those three castes these 61 people be*longed

1901 — — — 61
1891 — — — 0

Bhuinmali(S)—An indigenous caste of Sylhet, who are said to be allied *to the Haris. The majority of the caste are now culti*vators, palanquin bearers, tank excavators and so forth.

1901 — — — 48,147
1891 — — — 40,240

In 1881 these persons were all shown as Mali, and the decrease in numbers at the last census as compared with 1891 is probably due to an increased use of this term. Very few Bhummalis were censused outside the Sylhet district.

Bhuiya.—An aboriginal tribe of Chota Nagpur which is in great request on tea gardens, where 38 193 Bhuiyas were censused. They were found in considerable numbers in every tea district but were most numerous in Sibsagar

1901 — — — 38,193
1891 — — — 12,125

Bhumij—A Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur closely allied to the Munda. They are still in a primitive stage of Hinduism and consume fowls and liquor Probably all the Bhumij censused in the province came to it originally as coolies, and 25 223 were censused on the tea plantations.

1901 — — — 25,223
1891 — — — 8,308

Bhutia.—The decrease in the number of Bhutias is more apparent than real and seems to be due to their having been entered under other names, such as *Buddhist unspecified* 1 654 people returned themselves as speaking the Bhutia language and they were probably all Bhutias. The majority were censused in Kamrup and Darrang, these being the two districts *between which and Towang (a small province under the control of Thibet which* touches our frontier near Udalguri) and Bhutan there is most trade.

1901 — — — 1,703
1891 — — — 1,654

Bind—A large non Aryan caste of Behar and Upper India, who are connected with the Nonuiak. Their social status is low, and they are generally employed as fishermen, earth workers and daily labourers 2 032 were censused on tea-gardens.

1901 — — — 2,032
1891 — — — 1,441

Binjhia.—An agricultural tribe found in the south of what was formerly the Lohardaga district. They are still in the earlier stages of con ersion to Hinduism, and according to Mr Risley eat fowl and wild pig In Assam they are employed as garden coolies.

1901 — — — 272
1891 — — — 158

Birhor—A small Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur who according to Mr Risley live in the jungle in tiny huts made of branches of trees, and eke out a miserable living by snaring hares and monkeys and collecting jungle products. The Burhors censused in Assam have been imported as garden coolies

1901 — — — 99
1891 — — — 78

Boria (A)—A caste which as far as I know is peculiar to Assam and is formed from the offspring of Brahman and Ganak widows and their descendants. Boria is said to be derived from ban, a widow but the people prefer to call themselves Sut. This term is said *by some to be connected with the word Sudra and by others to be derived from* Sut the expounder of the Puranas who was himself the son of a Brahman widow but the most plausible explanation seems to be that it is an abbreviation of Suta, the name given *in the Shastras to the offspring of a Brahman woman by a Vaisya or Kshatriya father* One authority defines a Boria as the child of a Brahman widow and a Sut as the result of union between a Sudra widow and a Brahman but I doubt whether this explanation is correct as in the latter case the child would presumably be of the same caste as its mother The children of Brahman girls who have attained puberty before marriage

1901 — — — 12,111
1891 — — — 11,111

and so have to be married to men of a lower caste, are also classed with Bonas It is a singular fact that Bonas are more numerous in Nowgong than in any other district, though the number of Brahmans there is comparatively small I pointed this out to an educated Brahman belonging to one of the priestly family of Nowgong, and the explanation offerred by him was that the Gosains and Mohants of that district had put pressure upon householders to give away young Brahman widows in marriage to men of lower castes, to prevent the society from becoming demoralized The suggestion seems a strange one from the mouth of a Brahman, but I give it for what it is worth

Caste

The figures in the margin show the distribution of Bonas by districts There has been little change except in Nowgong, where the whole of the indigenous population has decreased in very nearly the same proportion

	1901.	1891
Kamrup	1,002	969
Darrang	3 786	3 568
Nowgong ...	7 799	11,612
Sibsagar	5 348	5 319
Lakhimpur	1 294	941
Other districts	188	112
Province ..	19 417	22,521

Brahman (P) —Described by Mr Risley as the highest of the three twice-born castes and originally the priests of the Aryan community In the eleventh century Ballal Sen, a king of Bengal, instituted a careful enquiry into the qualifications of the Brahmans in his kingdom, and a certain proportion were found deficient in their knowledge of the Hindu ritual and lax in their practice According to one tradition, these ignorant Brahmans were the ancestors of the greater part of the Brahman community in Assam, and though their numbers have from time to time been recruited by priests who were imported from India by the various native kings, the Brahmans of Assam are not so highly organised a community as those of Bengal There is no Kulinism, in Assam Proper there are no sub-castes, and in Sylhet the Rarhi and Barendra sub-castes are almost unknown In Lower Assam, Brahmans are said to take *ga-dhon* when they give their daughters in marriage, and there is a certain amount of laxity in their observance of the rules regarding the *gotra* The figures in the margin show the distribution of Brahmans by districts The large increase in their numbers is chiefly due to the inclusion of figures for Manipur, and partially to the fact that more Barna Brahmans have omitted the qualifying prefix than in 1891.

1901 ..	109 446
1891	97,001

	1901	1891
Cachar Plains	3 500	4 880
Sylhet	39 701	37 093
Goalpara	3 200	2,903
Kamrup	23 145	24 738
Darrang	6 432	4 741
Nowgong ..	6 115	7 430
Sibsagar ..	14 438	12 177
Lakhimpur	3 808	2,465
Manipur	7 295	
Other districts ..	1 650	514
Province ..	100 440	97 001

British —The term British includes those who have returned themselves as English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh In 1901 there were 1,384 males and 423 females, as compared with 1,029 males and 352 females in 1891 There has been a large increase in the British population of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, but in the Cachar Plains it is positively less than it was ten years ago, the depression in the tea industry during the last few years having necessitated a considerable reduction in the European establishment As is only natural, the British are most numerous in the great tea districts, *i e*, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Sylhet, Cachar and Darrang

	1901	1891
Cachar Plains	248	251
Sylhet	299	240
Goalpara ...	40	43
Kamrup ..	31	29
Darrang ..	195	161
Nowgong ...	88	34
Sibsagar ...	301	199
Lakhimpur ...	403	203
Lushai Hills	15	13
North Cachar	42	1
Naga Hills ..	16	8
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	102	133
Garo Hills ..	7	
Manipur	20	..
Province	1 807	1 381

Brittial Baniya (A)—At the last census this caste was returned under the name of Hari, and the following remarks were recorded about them in the report

1901	7 784
1891	0

Their position has of late years much improved, especially in the Brahmaputra Valley, where they have taken largely to trade and to working in gold, and many of them now describe themselves by euphemistic terms expressive of these occupations, such as Brittiyal and Sonari

As has been shown in Chapter IX, the proportion of educated men amongst the Brittial Baniyas is unusually large, and the leaders of their community submitted a memorial to the Chief Commissioner, in which they denied all connection with the sweeper caste, and asked to be allowed to abandon the term Hari This concession was granted to them, and there can be no question as to the fact that at the present day, the Brittial Baniyas are clerks, goldsmiths, and agriculturists and decline to acknowledge any sort of connection with the scavengering class Whether they were originally the sweeper Haris, as has been stated in previous census reports, or goldsmiths, who from their pilfering habits were called Apahari, as the Brittials themselve allege, it is not for me to decide The claims put forward by them have, however, been rejected by all

Caste.

high-caste Assamese with whom I have had any correspondence* or conversation on the subject.

Chamar—The tanner caste of Behar and Upper India. They are largely employed as coolies especially in the Surma Valley and 30 693 were censused on tea gardens. They stand at the very bottom of the scale in the Hindu social system.

1901	14,276
1891	14,276

Chasa.—According to Mr Risley the chief cultivating caste of Orissa who though probably of non Aryan origin rank sufficiently high for Brahmans to take water from their hands 2 006 were censused in the Sibsagar district to which place they had no doubt been imported as garden coolies.

1901	2,006
1891	0

Chaudhari—A title of Halwais Goalas, Sunris, Kalwars Kurmis and many other castes.

Chero—A cultivating caste of Behar and Chota Nagpur which there enjoys a fairly good position 52 Cheros were censused on tea gardens

1901	52
1891	170

Chhatri.—A synonym for Rajput. The majority of the persons who returned themselves under this title had probably but little real claim to it

1901	17,479
1891	1,300

Chunari.—An occupational title indicating a lime burner 270 persons were returned under this head in Sylhet

1901	270
1891	25

Chutiya (A)—One of the race castes of Assam Robinson† describes them as being a branch of the great Shan family who in all probability settled in the province a short time prior to the invasion of the Ahoms but linguistically they are connected with the Bodo and according to an old Assamese *Buranji*, they entered Assam from the north, crossed the Subansiri and settled near Sadiya, where they overthrew a Hindu Pal dynasty At the time of the Ahom invasion they were the dominant power in Upper Assam but they were completely crushed by the Ahoms at the beginning of the 16 h century Hinduism had made great strides amongst the Chutiyas even before their overthrow and they are now divided into three classes,—Hindu, Ahom and Borahi Chutiya. The first two sections of the tribe have been completely Hindoised but though they intermarry the Hindu Chutiya claims to take precedence of the Ahom Chutiya, and I am told that the presence of the latter in any house debars a Brahman from drinking water there, though the same restraint is not exercised by the Hindu Chutiya They are served by a Patit Brahman, and their manners and customs are those of the ordinary low-caste Assamese. The Borahi Chutiya, as his name signifies is a till unconverted and an eater of swine's flesh, but he will not touch goat which is permitted, of course, to the Hindoised section of the tribe, a survival no doubt of some totemistic theories on the subject The position of the caste in society is a low one, and education has made but little progress amongst them

	1901	1891
Kamrup	8,139	7,518
Darrang	8,439	7,518
Sibsagar	9,443	10,447
Nowgong	17,262	24,147
Lakhimpur	13,146	17,403
Other districts	443	443
Province	56,838	67,081

The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts There has been little change except in Nowgong where Chutiyas, like the rest of the population, have suffered heavily

Dafla (A)—A tribe who live in the hills to the north of the Tezpur and North Lakhimpur subdivisions Colonel Dalton considers them to be closely allied to the Hill Miris, and Mr Penny of Biswanath, who has visited their hills, says that they are akin to and intermarry with the Abors. The Daflas have a reputation for cowardice, and as politically they are very disunited they are at the mercy of the Akas their less numerous but more warlike neighbours on the west. Their clothing is scanty and its most distinguishing feature

1901	984
1891	1,337

District A.— Hari or Bratial Baniya. These original occupation as probably sweeper or mehtar All of them have now departed from it. Their present occupation is goldsmith and cultivation."

District B.— Bratial, Hari, these t ermsmarry; they are one and the same caste in practice.

District C.— The theory that Hari is corrupt on of Apahari, meaning stealer of gold, is quite fanciful. During the Ahom rule they were professional scavengers. Latterly many of them took to the profession of goldsmith.

District D.— Bratial Baniya. This m new invention, they are pure and simple H ris, and are inferior in position to Doms or Nadiyals.

Sylhet A.— Bratial Baniya. N doubt this class or caste, if it means anything has been newly created. Whether they should be returned by this name or called Hari is question, kich it is assumes to discuss. That they are inferior to the Nadiyals does not admit of any doubt.

† History of Assam, page 323.

is a cane cap with a fringe of bear skin or feathers, which gives them a very curious appearance The men wear their hair in a plait, which is coiled into a ball on the forehead, to which they fasten their caps with a long skewer They keep slaves, and, though they treat them kindly, will not allow them to marry free women On more than one occasion, I have seen Bengali coolies who had run away into the hills and been converted into Daflas, and the effect was very curious They do not seem to be particular about the chastity of their women, and I have heard of a case in which a Dafla proposed to barter the services of the lady who was accompanying him, presumably his wife, in exchange for a bottle of whisky A certain number of Daflas have settled in the plains, but the variation in the figures depends upon the number who happen to be down from the hills on the census night

Caste.

1901 295
1891 .. 0
1901 660
1891 .. 1 021

Dami—According to Mr Risley, a Nepalese caste, whose traditional occupation is tailoring

Darzi—An occupational rather than a caste name, indicating a tailor

1901 71,092
1891 .. 0

Das (S)—The people who have returned themselves under this name were called Halwa Das in 1891 According to their own account, the Das were originally a warlike race of Bengal, who had great power and influence in Sylhet, and they now claim to rank above the Nabasakh and in some parts of the Surma Valley to be superior to Kayasthas These claims are not, as far as I can ascertain, admitted by the higher castes of Hindus, and I am told that there are some places even in the Sylhet district* where water is not taken from their hands by a Brahman, while it is quite the exception for the water of a Das priest to be drinkable by the higher castes From the memorials submitted by the Das, it would appear that there has been some confusion in their minds between earthly and heavenly rank Their position in this world may be one of wealth and influence, but this fact does not necessarily prove that the caste has a high position in the Hindu social system

The statement in the margin gives details by districts for Halwa Das in 1891 and Das, Sudra Das and Halwa Das at the last census The great decrease in their numbers in Sylhet is due to the use of the term Sudra

	1901.	1891
Cachar Plains	1 050	1 242
Sylhet	119 221	140 996
Goalpara	893	1 021
Other districts	310	277
Province	121,473	143,536

1901 .. 23
1891 .. 0

Dasnami—A title used by Sivaite religious mendicants

1901 .. 394
1891 .. 870

Dehan (S)—A small caste in Cachar, who are said to have formed part of an expedition despatched from the Assam Valley in the time of Nar Narayan They claim to be Koches or Rajbansis

1901 361
1891 0

Deori (A)—The priestly caste of the Chutiyas, who are still to be found in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, though in the former district they have been shown in the census tables under the head of Chutiya

Their original home was on the banks of the Kundil river east of Sadiya, but when the Ahom power began to decline, they were harried by the hill tribes in the neighbourhood, and at the beginning of the century they migrated to North Lakhimpur, and from there moved to the Majuli, the Dikrang river, Sissi Mukh and the Baligao mauza in Jorhat The Mongolian type is much more strongly marked in them than in the ordinary Chutiya, and they might easily be mistaken for Miris They keep pigs and fowls, but their most peculiar characteristic is the enormous size of the houses in which they dwell These houses are built on *changs*, and are enlarged from time to time to make room for the increasing size of the family. There are frequently as many as sixty persons living in one long barrack, and Mr Clark, the Subdivisional Officer of Jorhat, to whom I am largely indebted for the information embodied in this note, informs me that the Chutiyas themselves say that there are sometimes double this number living under one roof

The Deori Chutiyas on the Majuli profess to be Hindus, but beef is the only article of food from which they abstain, and Mr Clark informs me that all that they could remember of the instructions of their *Gosain* was that they were to pray to God, and keep their instructions secret, and it was possibly with the idea of avoiding any risk of indiscretion that they had so carefully forgotten all that they had been told Their temples are copies in wood and thatch of the famous copper temple at Sadiya,

* *e g*, in parganas Bejura and Kasimnagar

Caste.

which was at one time a centre of worship for all the hill tribes on the north-east frontier but has long been in ruins. These models are small domed buildings about eight feet square, raised on high bamboos and not unlike pigeon houses in appearance standing in enclosures, into which no one but the temple officials are allowed to enter and in the principal village on the Majuli a copper roof is being placed on the model to render the resemblance more complete. Mr Brown, who was at one time Assistant Commissioner in North Lakhimpur, reports that the Deoris attach great importance to their own religion, but that a knowledge of its mysteries is apparently confined to the priests and the older men. There are four priests attached to each khel, the Bor and Saru Deori and the Bor and Saru Bharali. The two Deoris alone are entitled to enter the temple and the Bhoralis, as their name implies, are mainly concerned with the temporalities of the goddess. The chief gods are three—Gerasi Gen (Assamese Bura bun') worshipped by the Debongia khel; Pishadema (Assamese Boliya hemata') the elder son, worshipped by the Tengapa-*mya khel and Peshan (the daughter)* who *is also known as Tamoshan Mal* (the mother of the copper temple) and Kochakhati (the eater of raw flesh) The latter name is given in memory of the annual human sacrifice which in former times used to be offered to the goddess, the victim being provided by the Ahom Raja. This abomination was discontinued during the reign of Gaurinath Singh and according to the Deoris it was from that date that the power of the Ahoms began to decline.

1921	Dhai —A midwife the majority of those returned were	
1901	– 104	Muhammadans

Dhangar —According to Mr Risley the name is functional and signifies an agricultural labourer in Chota Nagpur and not a caste or tribe. The Dhangars in this province are garden coolies

1921	Dhanuk.—A cultivating caste of Behar Their social position according to	
1901	– – 115	Mr Risley is respectable, as they rank with Kurmis and Koiris and Brahmans will take water from their hands; 215 were censused on tea gardens

1921	Dhari.—A class of women who play sing and dance.	
1901	– 8	

Dhenuar —A small Dravidian caste of Chota Nagpur possibly akin to the Mundas only 4 were censused outside tea gardens.

1921		
1901	– 432	

Dhoba (S) —According to Mr Risley the Dhoba are the washerman caste of Bengal and Orissa, and the Dhobi the corresponding caste in Bihar; but it is obvious that as the names are so much alike, very little reliance can be placed upon the figures. The social position of the caste is low and they rank with Chandals and people of that class a fact which no doubt explains the great decrease that has occurred in Sylhet, which is probably due to Dhobis having returned themselves as Sudras.

	Dhoba.	Dhobi.
1921	18,044	14,564
1901	14,564	13,603

Dholi (S) —A functional caste which has possibly sprung from the Dom Patni or Kalbartia. They rank very low in the social scale, and their traditional occupation is drumming. Only 175 Dholis were censused outside Sylhet.

1921	10,172	
1901	– 7,247	

1921	Dhunia.—A Muhammadan caste, if the term be permissible of cotton carders.	
1901	– – 80	

Doaniya (A) —A mixed race descended from Singphos and their Assamese slaves, 263 were censused in Sibsagar and 751 in Lakhimpur

1921		
1901	– – 1,014	

1921	Dogra.—A Punjab caste of Rajput origin.	
1901	– 12	

Dosadh.—According to Mr Risley a degraded Aryan or refined Dravidian caste of Behar and Chota Nagpur Their social status is very low and they will eat pork tortoises and fowls. 6,305 Dosadhs were censused on tea gardens the majority being found in the Surma Valley

1921		
1901	– – 9,193	

Fakir (P) —According to Mr Risley an Arabic word properly denoting Muhammadan religious mendicant but loosely used to denote beggars of all kinds. Eighteen Fakirs returned themselves as Hindus.

1921		
1901	– – 18	

Gadharia.—A section of Goalas in Behar The name returned was possibly Gadaniya, a synonym for Garen, the shepherd caste.

1921		
1901	– – – 1	

1901 278
1891 0

Gain —A title applied to low caste Muhammadan Caste singers

Ganak (P) —According to the Brahma Baivartta Puran, the Ganaks are descended from the wife of a Brahman, who miraculously gave birth to a child shortly after she had been ravished by a son of the sun-god In the Surma Valley, whether on account of their origin, or of their traditional occupation—astrology,—Ganaks are looked upon with much disfavour, and are placed below the castes from whose hands high-caste Hindus take water In Assam, however, their position is one of great respectability, and Mr Gait wrote of them in 1891

1901 20 535
1891 .. .. 23 739

Several Gosains of Upper Assam, who were consulted by Lieutenant Gurdon, bear testimony to the high position occupied by the Assam Ganaks, but admit that they cannot act as priests There is, however, no doubt that, though socially inferior to Brahmans, they rank above all other castes, their high position being doubtless due to the favour in which they were held by the Ahom and Koch kings

The Ganaks of Mangaldai, and the Tulsijaniya Ganaks of Sibsagar, are, however, said to be degraded, and in parts of Assam Kayasthas and Bor Kalitas have put forward claims to take precedence of Ganaks This movement is apparently due to a desire on the part of the higher castes amongst the Assamese to apply the rules of Bengal to the valley of the Brahmaputra As far as I can ascertain, the lower classes still place the Ganak immediately after the Brahman, and the opinion of the higher castes in a matter of this kind has obviously to be received with a good deal of caution

	1901	1891
Sylhet ..	5 610	6 859
Kamrup	6 048	5,067
Darrang	6 246	8 121
Sibsagar ..	1,997	2 081
Other districts ...	634	711
Total Province	20 535	23 739

The statement in the margin shows the distribution by districts The decrease in Sylhet and Darrang is probably due to Ganaks having returned themselves as Brahmans

Gandapal (P) —A small caste which is practically confined to Sylhet and Goalpara One theory of their origin is that they were hillmen who were employed as guards on boats navigating the *haors* of western Sylhet, where there used formerly to be a good deal of river dacoity, and who subsequently took to boating as a profession They are said to rank first amongst the fishing castes A considerable number of the Gandapals must, I think, have got themselves returned under other caste names

1901 460
1891 1,055

Gandhabanik (P) —The spice-selling, druggist, and grocer caste of Bengal They are sometimes called Baniyas, and of late years have taken to the manufacture of jewellery They are a clean Sudra caste, and are included amongst the Nabasakh , 1,066 were censused in Sylhet and 540 in Goalpara

1901 .. 1 043
1891 635

Gandhar —A small caste, who sing and play on musical instruments The solitary Gandhar was found in Kamrup

1901 1
1891 .. 0

Gangota —A cultivating and labouring caste of Behar They rank with Kurmis and Koiris, and Brahmans take water from their hands

1901 .. 2
1891 .. 4

Ganjhu —A title of Binjhias, Gonds, Khandaits, Kharwars, Musahars and others In 1891, the additional column in the schedule made it possible to ascertain to what caste the Ganjhus belonged, 1,763 persons on tea-gardens returned themselves under this title

1901 . 2 473
1891 0

Gareri —The shepherd and goatherd caste of Behar According to Mr Risley, the caste in Bengal is a pure one, *i e*, Brahmans can take their water , 327 were censused on tea-gardens

1901 .. 747
1891 .. 621

Garo (A) —An Animistic tribe, whose present home is in the hills which bear their name They are probably a section of the great Bodo tribe, which at one time occupied a large part of Assam 103,538 Garos were censused in the Garo Hills, 10,842 in Goalpara, 5,144 in Kamrup and 5,768 in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills , elsewhere, the number is small

1901 ... 128 117
1891 .. 110 754

1901 3
1891 .. 0

Gharti —A Nepalese caste or sub-caste

Ghasi —A Dravidian fishing and cultivating caste of Chota Nagpur They rank with Doms and Musahars, eat beef and pork and are greatly addicted to drink The Ghasis are a coolie caste, and 10,256 were censused on tea gardens

1901 ... [illegible]
1891 .. 9 172

Caste.

Ghatwal.—This is not a caste, but a title of many castes such as Bhumij, Kharwar Baun, etc., who have been brought to the province as garden coolies. There was nothing to show to what caste these persons really belonged. 9,514 Ghatwals were censused in Sibsagar 4,589 in Cachar and 3,905 in Lakhimpur

1921 — — — 21,477
1901 — — — 2,330

Goala (S)—The cowherd caste of India. In Behar they rank as a clean caste, from whom Brahmans can take water In Bengal they are placed below the Nabasakh, but in Orissa the Goalas affect a high standard of purity and look down upon their caste fellows in Bengal and Behar The Goalas in the Assam Valley are probably all foreigners, and only a portion of those in Sylhet and Cachar are natives of the province. The figures for 1891 include Ahirs, and if this caste is added to the Goalas of 1901 their number rises to 47 211 a fact which shows that the caste must have been largely recruited from outside during the last ten years Many of the buffalo-keepers in Assam probably returned themselves (and wrongly) as Goalas.

1921 — — — 22,303
1901 — — — 21,009

The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts. The increase in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur is probably due to coolie immigration, as no less than 16,390 Goalas were censused on the gardens of the province.

	1901.	1891.
Outlying Plains	1,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Sylhet	1,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Goalpara	1,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Nowgong	2,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Darrang	2,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Sibsagar	3,[illegible]	2,[illegible]
Lakhimpur	3,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Other districts	1,[illegible]	1,[illegible]
Province	22,[illegible]	21,[illegible]

Gond.—A Dravidian tribe of Lohardaga, Singhbhum and the Central Provinces. Colonel Dalton describes them as being sullen suspicious, indifferent cultivators and ugly Gonds come to this province as coolies, and 3,935 were censused on tea gardens.

1921 — — — 1,144

Gonrhi.—A fishing caste of Behar 72 were censused in Sylhet and 8 in Goalpara. They were probably all foreign boatmen. Their water is not usually taken by Brahmans.

1921 — — — 83
1901 — — — 80

Goralt.—A caste of Lohardaga, whose traditional occupation is music and comb making They eat beef and pork, and indulge freely in liquor; 1,461 were censused on tea-gardens.

1921 — — — 1,[illegible]
1901 — — — 1,[illegible]

Gulgulia.—A tribe of gipsies of somewhat disreputable character One Gulgulia was found in Goalpara.

1921 — — — 3
1901 — — — 30

Gurung—One of the best of the fighting tribes of Nepal. They are found in every district of the province but are most numerous in the Khasi and Jaintia and the Naga Hills, where the Gurkha regiments are stationed

1921 — — — 6,[illegible]
1901 — — — 1,[illegible]

Haijong (P)—The home of this tribe is the Garo Hills and the submontane tracts of Sylhet, 5 258 persons having been censused in the former and 2 805 in the latter district. In 1891 the Haijong language and the Haijong tribe were both said to be of Bodo origin, but subsequent investigations have revealed that the Haijong language is akin to Bengali. I have received no further information as to the racial affinities of the tribe.

1921 — — — 8,[illegible]
1901 — — — 8,[illegible]

Hajam.—The barber caste of Behar Their status is good and Brahmans take water from their hands. They are fairly evenly distributed throughout the province.

1921 — — — 1,[illegible]
1901 — — — 1,[illegible]

Halwa Das (S)—The decrease in numbers is due to the fact that many members of this caste have returned themselves as Das or Sudra Das. The total for these three castes is 121,473 but it is probable that a large number of Halwa Dases have returned themselves simply as Sudras. The caste is indigenous in the Surma Valley and very few of its members were found outside Sylhet (see Das)

1921 — — — 89,[illegible]
1901 — — — 123,[illegible]

Halwai.—The confectioner caste of Behar Their social position is good and Brahmans will take water from their hands. They are found in small numbers in most of the districts of the province, where they are probably serving as shopkeepers.

1921 — — — 1,[illegible]
1901 — — — [illegible]

Hari (S)—A menial and scavengering caste of Bengal Proper The great decrease in their numbers is due to the fact that the figures for 1891 include the Brittial Baniyas, of whom 7 784 were censused in the province.

1921 — — — 4,[illegible]
1901 — — — 13,[illegible]

It is doubtful whether Haris, as distinct from Brittial Baniyas, are indigenous in Assam Proper

Caste

Hira (A) —The caste is said to be a functional offshoot from the Namasudra or Chandal The Hiras are potters, the men bringing the clay and taking the pots to market, and the women fashioning them, not with the potter's wheel, but by laying on the earth in strips Hiras drink and smoke with Chandals, and give them their daughters in marriage, but will not take a Chandalni to wife themselves

1901 ... .. 8 703
1891 .. 10 005

Ho —A non-Aryan tribe of Singbhum They are said by Colonel Dalton to be physically and morally superior to the Mundas, Bhumij, and Santals, a fact which no doubt accounts for the small numbers who have been imported to the province

1901 103
1891 ... 22

Hojai (P) —According to Mr Gait, "a local name applied to the Kacharis in that part of Nowgong which was formerly under the rule of Tularam Senapati" It seems doubtful whether the term Hojai should appear at all in Table XIII, and no reliance can be placed upon the figures, as many of the Hojais have no doubt returned themselves under the proper tribal name of Bodo or Kachari They do not in fact use this name themselves, but call themselves Kachari or Demracha Kachari, Hojai being the name of their priests, or, according to another account, derived from 'Hoja,' simple They claim to be the royal section of the Kachari tribe I have received an interesting account of the Hojais from the Revd P H Moore, which I only refrain from publishing, as it would find a more suitable position in the ethnographic survey of the province

1901 839
1891 .. 3,780

Jaisi —A sub-caste of Nepalese Brahmans

1901 3
1891 0

Jaiswar —A name used by Rajputs, Telis, Baniyas, Kurmis, Tantis, Chamars and other castes

1901 176
1891 2

Jaladha (A).—In Darrang these people are said to be a degraded class of Kachari, but a Jaladha with whom I conversed in Kamrup claimed to be superior and not inferior to that tribe According to this man, Jaladhas and Kacharis do not as a rule intermarry, and when they do they have to perform *praschit*, the wife taking the caste of her husband In Goalpara, where the majority of Jaladhas are found, they are said to have taken *saran*, and to have a Brahman and a Napit

1901 5,090
1891 6,311

Jat —Either a sub-caste of Goalas, or an agricultural caste of the Punjab

1901 176
1891 51

Jharua (P) —A name which can be applied to any forest tribe, who live in the 'Jhar' tree jungle, 39 Jharuas were censused in Sylhet, they may have been Tipperas, Kacharis, Garos or Haijongs

1901 ... 61
1891 0

Jhora —A small caste of Chota Nagpur believed to be a sub tribe of Gonds, the name is also used as a title by Kewats in Behar, 196 were censused on tea-gardens.

1901 202
1891 117

Jimdar —A title of Khambus, one of the fighting tribes of Nepal

1901 .. 20
1891 .. 0

Jolaha —A Muhammadan weaver caste of Behar Employed as garden coolies in Assam, 1,519 were censused on the tea estates of the province

1901 .. ... 1 734
1891 .. ... 2 180

Jugi (P) —A weaving caste of Eastern Bengal, whose origin is obscure, and who are treated with much contempt by the pure Sudra castes In the Surma Valley they style themselves Nath, and claim descent from Gorakshanath, a devotee of Gorackpur, who is said to have been an incarnation of Siva On the strength of this ancestor, the Jugis bury instead of burn their dead, and frequently pose as Sannyasis In Cachar, they are making great efforts to rise in the social scale, and are discarding widow remarriage In Assam, the caste contains five subdivisions,—the Sapmelas or snake-charmers, the Katanis, the Polupohas, or rearers of silkworms, the Dulijas, or palki-bearers, and the Thivapotas, who bury their dead upright The Katanis in Assam usually burn their dead, and the Jugis of Goalpara are taking to infant marriage A short time ago the Jugis in Barpeta, at the instigation of a Brahman priest, assumed the sacred thread, and declared themselves to be Bhadralok It was suggested to them that they should prove their good position by requiring their priest to marry a Jugi girl, but the Brahman, as soon as this proposal was made to him, fled, and the pretensions of the Jugis received a crushing blow The net result of the movement is that they are now forbidden to enter the *ranighar* at all, though formerly they were allowed into the outer room The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts The

1901 ... .. 101 107
1891 ... ... 177 746

	1901	1891
Cachar Plains	11 048	11 103
Sylhet ...	78 015	87 302
Goalpara ...	17 804	13 987
Kamrup ...	17 454	17 400
Darrang ...	17 050	18 [illegible]
Nowgong ...	15 035	21 792
Sibsagar ...	6 201	6 [illegible]
Lakhimpur	1 400	948
Other districts	151	62
Province ...	101 107	177 746

Caste. decrease in Sylhet is probably due to a preference for the generic term Sudra, that in Nowgong to the actual decrease of the indigenous population.

Kachari (P) —A section of the great Bodo tribe, which at one time seems to have been in occupation of a large part of the valley of the Brahmaputra They are to be found as a rule living on the grassy plains at the foot of the Himalayas, and are most numerous in Kamrup and Darrang, but the Kachari kingdom once extended into the Surma Valley and the Cachar district is said to have been the dowry of a Tippera princess who married the Kachari king about the middle of the 17th century In Lower Assam the Kachari, on conversion to Hinduism, becomes a Koch but in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur he generally retains the tribal name The statement in the margin shows the distribution of the caste by districts.

	1901	1891
Sylhet	44,101	41,990
Goalpara	8,222	8,171
Kamrup	44,474	44,474
Darrang	44,136	44,136
Nowgong	13,000	13,014
Sibsagar	14,000	14,014
Lakhimpur	33,143	33,017
North Cachar	2,109	2,117
Naga Hills	1,117	1,072
Other districts	1,067	1,142
Province	200,000	243,378

The large increase in Goalpara is apparently due to people having returned themselves as Kachari instead of Koch.

Kadar —A non Aryan caste of cultivators and fishermen in Bhagalpur and the Santal Parganas Their social status is very low and in Assam they are employed as garden coolies The decrease in their numbers is probably due to members of the caste who returned themselves as Rikhiasan being classified as Musahars and Bhuiyas.

1901	193
1891	743

Kahar —A cultivating and palanquin bearing caste of Behar who in Bengal rank in the social scale with Kurmis and Goalas Brahmans taking water from their hands but according to Mr Risley many of them eat fowls, and they are much addicted to liquor 4 576 were censused on tea gardens.

1901	8,197
1891	8,419

Kalbartta (P) —According to Mr Risley, no serious attempt can be made to trace the origin of the Kalbartta, but he suggests, as a plausible hypothesis that they were amongst the earliest inhabitants of Bengal, and occupied a commanding position there, and that the Kewat were a branch of the same tribe which settled in Behar gradually became endogamous and adopted a Hindu name. In Kamrup the names Kewat and Kalbartta seem to be interchangeable, so I have given the figures for both together The Kalbartta are divided into two functional groups, which for all intents and purposes are separate castes the Halwa and Jaliya. In Assam Proper the Jaliya Kalbarttas are very scarce but the Nadiyals or Doms are endeavouring to get their claims to the name acknowledged by Government. The genuine Jaliya Kalbarttas however mark the difference between themselves and the Nadiyals by declining to sell fish except on the river bank within a paddle s throw of the boat, and abstaining from the use of the *ghoiia* net The Kewat or Kalbartta, in Assam is a clean Sudra caste, ranking immediately after the Kalita. In addition to the Jaliya, there are six other subdivisions,—Mafi, Halwa Seol Neoli, Kathaica and Bhari,—of which the Mali ranks highest though all six have taken to agriculture. I am told that these sub-castes will not intermarry or eat with one another, and decline to have anything to do with the Jaliya Kewats, even though they may have abandoned fishing for several generations. The great majority of the Kalbarttas in Sylhet belong to the Jaliya subdivision of the tribe.

1901	94,000
1891	97,222

Kewat

1901	94,199
1891	81,138

The figures in the margin show the distribution of the two castes taken together by districts. The decrease in Kamrup is very marked, as, even if the figures for Maheshya Vaisya be added, the total only amounts to 44,474, and as there is nothing in the figures for other castes in the district to suggest that Kewats have been wrongly included amongst them, I am inclined to think that the emigration of Kewats to the tea gardens of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur must have had some bing to do with the result. The decrease in Nowgong is not more than the unhealthiness of the decade would lead one to expect

Kalbartta and Kewat.

	1901	1891
Sylhet	44,101	41,990
Goalpara	8,222	8,171
Kamrup	44,474	44,474
Darrang	19,136	19,136
Nowgong	13,000	13,014
Sibsagar	14,000	14,014
Lakhimpur	33,143	33,017
Other districts	1,067	1,142
Province	190,323	184,138

Kalita (A) —There is much uncertainty as to the origin of this caste The popular explanation is that Kalitas are Kshatriyas who fleeing from the wrath of Parasu Ram, concealed their caste and their persons in the jungles of Assam and were thus called Kul lupta. Other theories are that they are Kayasthas degraded for having taken to cultivation, an explanation which in itself seems somewhat improbable and is not supported, as far as I am aware by any evidence, or that they are the old priestly caste of the Bodo tribe. The latter theory can hardly be said to account for their origin, as their features are of an Aryan type, and though it is possible that Kalitas may

have acted as priests to some of the early Kachari converts, this fact throws little or no light on the problem of what the Kalitas are The most plausible suggestion is that they are the remains of an Aryan colony, who settled in Assam at a time when the functional castes were still unknown in Bengal, and that the word 'Kalita' was originally applied to all Aryans who were not Brahmans. Caste

This explanation is not incompatible with the popular theory as to the origin of the name, as later Aryan immigrants from Bengal would actually have had some difficulty in deciding to which of the newly-formed castes the settlers in Assam belonged Mr Risley reports that there is an agricultural caste in the southern tributary *mahals* of Chota Nagpur, who call themselves Kalitas, but it seems doubtful whether these people have any connection with the Kalitas of Assam

The Kalitas are divided into two main subdivisions, Bar and Saru, and into a number of professional sub-castes In Upper Assam, Bar Kalitas are said to decline to use the plough, though they occasionally work with the spade, but there is no such restriction in Kamrup, where the great bulk of the caste is found Cultivation is, in fact, the traditional occupation of the caste, and they even consent to work as coolies on tea gardens The usual procedure for a Kalita who has succeeded in rising above the necessity for manual labour, and is no longer compelled to follow the plough, is to call himself a Kaist or Kayastha

Two explanations are given of the origin of the Saru Kalita,—one that he is the offspring of persons who for three generations back have not been united by the '*hom*' ceremony, the other that he is the child of a Bar Kalita and a Kewat woman Whether the Barkalita can intermarry with, and eat *kachchi* with the Saru Kalita seems open to question, and the practice apparently varies in different districts, but there seems to be no doubt that the functional subdivisions of the caste are debarred from the privilege of close intercourse with the Bar Kalita These subdivisions are the Mali, Sonari, Kamar, Kumhar, Tanti, Napit and Nat The first two intermarry with the Saru Kalita, and also with the Kamar Kalita The last four groups are endogamous All these functional groups are to some extent looked down upon, probably because followers of these professions, who were not true Kalitas, have occasionally succeeded in obtaining admission within their ranks, but the goldsmiths, from their wealth, have secured a good position in society In Sibsagar, there are a number of miscellaneous sections, such as the Kakatis (scribes), Kaporchoa (wardrobe keepers), Naotolia (boatmakers), but none of these sectional names have been returned at the census Kalitas have a good Brahman for their priest, and their water is taken by every caste, a fact which no doubt explains the high value attached to Kalita slaves in the time of the Assam Rajas, when two Koches could be purchased for the price of a single Kalita, though the Koch is generally the hardier and stronger man of the two

The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts The decrease in Kamrup is probably partially due to emigration, that in Nowgong is in no way abnormal for that unhealthy district

	1901	1891
Goalpara	11 054	9 707
Kamrup ..	115 590	120 030
Darrang	17 830	19 470
Nowgong	16 320	24 034
Sibsagar	30 027	34 475
Lakhimpur	5 412	4 094
Other districts	203	197
Province ..	203 108	222 606

Kalwar—A liquor-selling and trading caste of Behar Their social status is low, and Brahmans will not take water from their hands, 1,041 were censused on tea-gardens

1901	1 930
1891 ..	709

Kamar (S)—According to Mr Risley, the metal-working caste of Bengal and Behar, who are distinguished from the Lohar by not confining themselves to iron as the material of their art In Bengal and Behar their water is taken by Brahmans A large number of Kamars are employed as garden coolies in the Assam Valley, but they are indigenous in Sylhet

1901 ..	33 742
1891 ..	29 654

Kami—The blacksmith caste of Nepal They are found in small numbers in nearly every district in the province

1901	270
1891 ...	120

Kan—A very low caste of musicians, akin to the Doms Cachar was the only district in which they were found, and all of them were censused on tea gardens

1901	85
1891 ..	0

Kandh—A Dravidian tribe of one of the tributary States of Orissa, famous for the systematic and brutal manner in which they used to sacrifice human beings to ensure successful harvests It was believed that the abundance of the rainfall depended upon the number of tears shed by the victim, and he was in consequence sometimes roasted over a slow fire and sometimes cut to pieces with knives, care being taken to avoid touching any vital part

1901 ..	1 783
1891 ..	175

Caste. Kandhs are employed as garden coolies and 1 745 were censused on the tea estates of the province.

Kandu.—A gram parching caste of Bengal and Behar where they rank with Koiris

1901 = = = 8,216 and Goalas as Brahmans take water from their hands.

Kanjar.—A Dravidian gipsy caste of the North Western Provinces 35 were censused in Kamrup

Kansari.—The brazier caste of Bengal. Their social position is respectable but

1901 = = = 29/41 the Kansans in this province were probably coolies

Kapali (S).—A weaving caste, who are practically confined to the Sylhet district. Their social position is low and Brahmans do not take

1901 = = = 670/1,128 their water

Karanga.—A small Dravidian caste of Chota Nagpur who make baskets, dig

1901 = = = 24 tanks etc. Karangas in Assam are garden coolies.

1901 = = = 23/8 **Kasai**.—A functional name, indicating a butcher

1901 = = = 1/3 **Kasera**.—The brass founding caste of Behar

Kaur.—A caste, probably of Dravidian origin, who are found in the tributary States of Chota Nagpur The majority were censused on

1901 = = = 144/243 tea gardens in Upper Assam.

Kawali (S).—An off-shoot from the Kapali caste of weavers. In Bengal they are said to have become musicians but in Sylhet they differ

1901 = = = 174/253 very slightly from the Kapalis

Kayastha (P).—The writer caste of Bengal. It is indigenous to Sylhet, and there are a certain number of genuine Assamese Kayasthas,

1901 = = 28,848 though I am inclined to think that a considerable proportion of the so-called Kaists are only Kalitas who have risen in the world. In Assam Proper the Kayasthas are beginning to adopt the sacred thread but wear it very short; but this fashion has not yet spread to the Surma Valley and the Kayasthas do not attempt to pose as Kshatriyas, though occupying a good position in society They intermarry with Baidyas in the Surma Valley The statement in the margin shows the distribution of the caste by districts. The decrease in Sylhet is due to the care taken by enumerators to exclude from the category of Kayastha those persons who were not properly entitled to the name.

	1901.	1891.
Cachar	1,000	1,014
Sylhet	27,000	7,114
Nowgong	1,000	1,000
Kamrup	1,000	1,000
Darrang	1,000	1,000
Lakhimpur	1,000	1,000
Sibsagar	1,000	1,000
Other districts	1,848	471
Province	33,848	13,599

Kazi.—A title borne by Muhammadans who are authorised to register marriages.

1901 = = 28 Not properly a caste

Kewat.—See Kaibartta.

Khadal.—I am unable to ascertain what this caste is supposed to represent Nearly all of them were censused on tea gardens, and it is

1901 = = = 1,221 possible that it is only a functional name denoting people who work with a hoe.

1901 = = = 119 **Khambu**.—One of the fighting tribes of Nepal.

Khamjang.—A section of the Shan tribe, who are

1901 = = 21 said to be akin to the Noras.

Khamti (A).—A Shan tribe who have settled in the country to the north and east of the Lakhimpur district. The decrease in their

1901 = = = 1,878/2,615 numbers is partly due to a certain number of persons in Lakhimpur having returned themselves as Buddhists unspecified

1901 = = 223/8 **Khan**.—A Muhammadan title usually borne by Pathans

Khandait.—A cultivating caste of Orissa who have been brought to this province

1901 = = = 245 as coolies, 245 having been censused on tea gardens.

Kharia.—A Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur largely employed as coolies, 6,017 having been censused on tea gardens. Mr Risley says

1901 = = = 7,221 that their religion is a mixture of Animism and nature worship but in Assam the immense majority have described themselves as Hindus.

Caste.

Kharwar—A Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur employed as garden coolies The decrease in their numbers is probably due to Kharwars having been classified as Bhuiyas or Bhumij, as one of their titles, Bhogta, is shared by these two tribes

1001 .. .. 1 081
1891 4,500

Khas—One of the best of the fighting tribes of Nepal

1001 .. 500
1891 .. 96

Khasi (A)—The tribe who inhabit the Khasi Hills The linguistic affinities of their language have long puzzled philologists, but it has now been decided that it belongs to the Mon Anam family

1001 .. ..111 606
1891 120 411

Khatik—A low cultivating caste of Behar, who rank little higher than the Musahars

1001 17
1891 0

Khatri (P)—According to Mr Risley, a mercantile caste of the Punjab, who allege themselves to be direct descendants of the Kshatriyas, but in this province the immense majority of Khatris are Hindu-ised Manipuris Bhats and converted Kacharis in the Surma Valley also use this title

1001 .. ..185 507
1891 226

Khawas—A title of Dhanuks and Kewats and a sub-caste of Ghartis The majority of Khawases were censused on tea gardens

1001 155
1891 .. 111

Kiranti—A title of Khambus, Limbus and other Nepalese tribes Possibly Kiran, a cultivator, was meant

1001 .. 10
1891 0

Kisan—A title used by Kalwars and Kharias Kisan are garden coolies

1001 .. 722
1891 .. 418

Koch (A)—According to Mr Gait "the name in Assam is no longer that of a tribe, but rather of a Hindu caste into which all converts to Hinduism from the different tribes—Kachari, Garo, Haijong, Lalung, Mikir, etc —are admitted on conversion In Assam, therefore, it seems, for the present at any rate, desirable to treat the Koch as allied to the Bodo, and through them as a branch of the Mongolian stock" They rank as a clean Sudra caste, and Brahmans will take water from their hands, but their position is, I think, higher in Upper than in Lower Assam, as in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur Animistic persons who are converted to Hinduism retain their tribal names, and do not think it necessary to pretend to be Koches There are various subdivisions of the Koch caste, through which the family of a convert passes in successive generations The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts In Kamrup and Nowgong Koches have decreased in numbers at about the same rate as the rest of the indigenous population, but in Darrang the Koch must either have suffered more severely from *kala-ázár* than other Assamese, or some of them must have returned themselves as Kewat In Goalpara there has been a decrease in the number of the Koch at each of the last two enumerations, the causes of which are obscure

	1001	1891
Goalpara	7 139	13 515
Kamrup	93,850	100 016
Darrang	47 427	54 088
Nowgong	33 553	49 701
Sibsagar	27 531	25 656
Lakhimpur	7 555	6 047
Garo Hills	4 333	4 245
Other districts	333	1 576
Province	221 721	254,034

Koiri—A cultivating caste of Behar and Chota Nagpur According to Mr Risley their social position is respectable, and Brahmans will take water from their hands In Assam they are employed as coolies, and 7,098 were censused on tea gardens

1001 .. 11,153
1891 .. 5 800

Kol—A generic term applied to Mundas, Oraons, Bhumij and Kharias, 15,894 were enumerated on tea gardens

1001 .. .. .. 18 428
1891 2,704

Kora—A Dravidian caste of earth-workers in Chota Nagpur and Western Bengal; their social position is very low, and in Chota Nagpur they are said to eat beef, pork and fowls, 2,928 were censused on tea gardens

1001 .. .. 3 581
1891 .. 4 009

Korwa—A Dravidian tribe of Palamau They have only recently entered the pale of Hinduism, though in Assam only a small number returned themselves as anything but Hindus, 2,243 were censused on tea gardens

1001 2,248
1891 760

Koshta—A weaving caste of Chota Nagpur, 23 were censused on tea estates

1001 .. 24
1891 14

Kotal—A Dravidian cultivating caste of Central Bengal, ranking with the Chandal Kotals come to the province as garden coolies.

1001 59
1891 15

Kuki (P)—A hill tribe akin to the Lushais, most of whose settlements are to be found in Cachar the Naga Hills and Manipur The great increase in their numbers is due to the inclusion of the figures for that State

1001 .. 27 827
1891 .. 18 799

Caste.

Kumhar (P)—The potter caste, which in Bengal is one of the members of the Nabasakh They are most numerous in Sylhet, where 12 278 were censused and Kamrup where 6 678 were enumerated but as pointed out by Mr Gait it is doubtful whether in the Assam Valley the Kumhar is not merely a Kalita who has taken to pottery 3 238 Kumhars were censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Kureshi.—A Muhammadan tribe in Sylhet who trace their descent to Kuresh of Mecca, one of the ancestors of Muhammad. The decrease in their numbers is presumably due to many of them having returned themselves as Sheikh

1901 — — — 209
1891 — — — 1,334

Kuri—A name used either by Dosadhs or Mazaras.

1901 — — — 148

Kurmi.—A large cultivating caste of Upper India Behar and Chota Nagpur In Behar the social status of the caste is respectable, but in Chota Nagpur they eat fowls and field rats, and are much addicted to liquor so that Brahmans do not take water at their hands. They are largely employed as coolies in Assam, and 12 577 were censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Kusiari (S)—The Kusiari are a caste indigenous to Sylhet who are said to be called after the river of that name, though the connection of ideas is far from clear Their complexion is generally dark, and they are supposed to be descended from some hill tribe. They are industrious pugnacious and well to-do and it is expected that their strenuous efforts to enter the ranks of clean Sudra castes will soon be crowned with success. In 1891 many Kusiaris returned themselves under other names.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Laheri.—A Behar caste, whose traditional occupation is the making of bangles 39 were censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Lalbegi.—A sweeper caste.

Lalung (A)—A tribe probably of Bodo origin, who inhabit the southern portion of the Nowgong district I have received a most interesting account of the Lalungs from the Rev P H. Moore, but abstain from reproducing it in extenso in view of the publication of the ethnographic survey of the province. Most of the tribal legends represent them as moving from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills to the plains as they disapproved of the ruling of the Khasi chiefs that inheritance should go through the female. Another quaint tradition says that they originally lived near Dimapur but moved into the Jaintia Hills to escape from the necessity of providing the Kachari king with six seers of human milk every day this being an article of diet to which he was much attached The tribe is divided into a number of clans, whose names suggest a totemistic origin, and all of which, except the Masorang, are exogamous. The rule of inheritance is peculiar A woman may either enter her husband s clan or the husband may enter the wife's, but all property and children of the marriage belong to the clan which was adopted at the time of the wedding If a man enters his wife's clan he can leave it on her death but loses all claim to his property and children. The Lalung religion is of the usual Animistic type, and in the time of the Assam Rajas they are said to have sacrificed eight human victims annually to their gods. They are a sturdy independent people, and on the 18th October 1861 killed the Assistant Commissioner of Nowgong, Lieutenant Singer who had been sent out to disperse an unlawful assembly formed to protest against the prohibition of the home cultivation of opium. The great decrease in their numbers is due to the ravages of *kalá ázár* 28 985 were censused in the Nowgong district alone.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Lama.—A sept of Gurungs (q v)

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Lepcha.—A Mongolian tribe of Eastern Nepal.

Limbu.—A large Mongolian tribe of the Kirant desh According to Mr Risley, though they consider themselves a military race they do not rank amongst the regular fighting tribes of Nepal, and they are not admitted into Gurkhali regiments of the Nepalese army The distribution of the caste by districts suggests that a certain number are serving in our Military Police Battalions

Lodha.—An agricultural and labouring caste of the North Western Provinces; 204 were censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — [illegible]
1891 — — — [illegible]

Caste.

Lohait Kuri (S).—According to Mr Risley, a small fishing caste who live on the banks of the Meghna, but in Sylhet, which is practically the only district in which they were censused, the Lohait is a grain parcher, and has nothing to do with fishing Brahmans will eat fried rice prepared by them, but will not take their water

1901 414
1891 0

Lohar.—The blacksmith caste of Behar, Chota Nagpur, and Western Bengal They are largely employed as coolies in Assam, and 7,374 were censused on tea gardens In Behar, Brahmans will take water from their hands, but in Western Bengal their status is lower, and they rank with Bauris and Bagdis

1901 10,404
1891 7,388

Loi (A)—The descendants of one of the aboriginal tribes who formerly occupied the south of the Manipur valley They claim to be Hindus, but are not recognised as such by the orthodox Under native rule Manipuris used to be degraded, either temporarily or permanently, to the grade of Loi as a punishment

1901 .. 3,618
1891 .. 0

Lushai—For an account of the Lushai tribes, see the Note by Major Shakespear, C I E, D S O, appended to this chapter

1901 63,452
1891 257

Magar.—One of the fighting tribes of Nepal The majority were censused in the Khasi and Jaintia and Naga Hills, where the two Gurkha regiments are stationed

1901 2,933
1891 3,404

Magh—According to Mr Risley, the popular designation of a group of Indo-Chinese tribe, 117 Maghs were censused in the Lushai Hills, the remainder were probably persons who had come from Chittagong to take service as cooks in European households

1901 .. 172
1891 .. 13

Mahalia (A)—A name applied to a Kachari in one of his stages to conversion In 1891 the majority of Mahalias were returned in Darrang and Nowgong, but in the last census in these two districts they seem to have returned themselves as Koch or Kachari The number of Mahalias in Lakhimpur has risen from 196 to 1,235, but the term is one which can be very loosely used

1901 1,235
1891 5,612

Mahanta—A title of the Kurmi caste, and of the priests of the Jugi caste, These priests are themselves Jugis, and marry the daughters of their own disciples

1901 483
1891 0

Mahara (S)—A title used by Kahars, whose traditional occupation is palki-bearing Their water is not drinkable by the higher castes, but their touch does not pollute a hookah Very few Maharas are found outside Sylhet, but a considerable number of the caste seem to have returned themselves simply as Kahars

1901 .. 3,078
1891 .. 6,202

Mahesri—A trading caste of Northern India closely allied to the Agarwals and Oswals, 350 were censused in the Brahmaputra Valley.

1901 408
1891 250

Maheshya Vaisya (A)—A somewhat high sounding title assumed by a certain number of Halwa Kewats in Kamrup, who were afraid of being confounded with the Nadiyals, who were trying to get themselves entered as Kaibarttas According to Manu a Maheshya is the offspring of a Kshatriya man and a Vaisya woman, and the use of this term in combination with Vaisya seems peculiar

1901 2,837
1891 0

Mahili—A Dravidian caste of labourers found in Chota Nagpur and Western Bengal Their social position is low, and they rank with the Bauris and Dosadhs, 4,668 were censused on tea gardens

1901 5,701
1891 3,606

Mahimal (S)—A Muhammadan fisher caste of Sylhet In 1881 they were not distinguished from other Muhammadans, and it is evident that on the present occasion a considerable number must have returned themselves as Sheikh

1901 30,544
1891 58,100

Mal.—A Dravidian cultivating caste of Central and Western Bengal They are employed as coolies in Assam, and 2,939 were censused on tea gardens Their social position is low

1901 4,435
1891 1,004

Mali (P)—Properly speaking, this caste is employed on the preparation of garlands, and in Bengal is included amongst the Nava-sakh The large increase in their numbers is apparently due to Bhummalis having dropped the prefix

1901 7,870
1891 1,034

Mallah—A title applied to boatmen of various castes, the majority of whom were censused in Goalpara.

1901 2,928
1891 1,490

Caste.

Malo (S)—A fisher caste indigenous to Sylhet ranking below the Kairbartta. Those censused in Assam Proper were probably foreigners imported to work on tea-gardens.

1901 — — — 18,579
1891 — — — 25,058

Mal Paharia.—A Dravidian tribe of the Santal Parganas.

1901 — — — 8,830
1891 — — — 7,217

Man (A)—*The Assamese name for Burmese or Shan under which name the* Mans were entered in 1891 The majority of Mans were found in the Garo Hills where they form a small colony left behind by the Burmese invaders when compelled to retire before our troops.

1901 — — — 908
1891 — — — 6

Manipuri (P)—Only 33 persons in the Manipur State returned themselves as Manipuri,—Brahman, Kshatriya and Sudra being the names that they preferred Manipuris were censused in the Surma Valley and in the great majority of cases probably belonged to the inferior class of Manipuri called Bishnupuriya. Their complexion is darker than that of *the ordinary Manipuri and their appearance is that of the average hill man. The great* decrease in the numbers that has taken place is due to the use of other caste names.

1901 — — — 44,010
1891 — — — 11,228

Manjhi—A title used by boatmen and by Santals Bagdis and numerous other castes; 4,055 Manjhis were censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — 8,421
1891 — — — 4,792

Mar—A small cultivating caste of Chota Nagpur

1901 — — — 20
1891 — — — 8

Markande.—A cultivating caste of the Santal parganas. The Markandes in Assam had probably all come there as coolies, though only *three were censused on tea gardens.*

1901 — — — 12
1891 — — — 15

Marua.—An epithet applied to up-country boatmen

1901 — — — 8
1891 — — — 8

Matak (A)—The name formerly given to an old division of Upper Assam lying between the Noa Dehing the Brahmaputra and the southern hills, and thus including nearly the whole of the Lakhimpur district on the south bank. This tract of country was occupied by the followers of the Moamaria Gosain who at the end of the 18th century had risen against the Ahom Rajas, and set up an independent ruler of their own. When the Singphos began to raid upon Assam they found that the Moamarias offered a sterner resistance than the other Assamese and called them in consequence Matak or strong, and the name of the people was then applied to the country in which they lived. At the present day the term denotes a sect rather than a caste or nationality The majority of the Mataks are Ahoms, Chutiyas and Doms; but there are a certain number of Kalitas, Kewats and Koches amongst them. All of these castes, except the Doms are said to intermarry, a fact which shows the looseness of the restrictions of caste in Assam. A large number of Mataks have probably returned themselves under their caste name

1901 — — — 743
1891 — — — 647

Maulik.—A Dravidian caste of Western Bengal They have returned themselves as Hindus but according to Mr Risley no Hindu will take water from their hands. Maulika were only censused on tea gardens.

1901 — — — 189
1891 — — — 208

Mayara (S)—The confectioner caste of Bengal who are indigenous in the Surma Valley They are members of the Nabasakh, and in Sylhet good Brahmans serve as their priests.

1901 — — — 1,488
1891 — — — 1,288

Mech (A)—The Mech are apparently identical with the Kachari tribe, but the name is practically confined to the Goalpara district. Hinduism does not seem to be making much progress amongst them, only 1 029 persons having returned themselves as followers of that religion; but converted Meches probably describe themselves as Rajbansis.

1901 — — — 14,187
1891 — — — 14,351

Mehtar—A sub-caste of Hans, who remove night soil.

1901 — — — 1,447
1891 — — — 776

Mekuri (A)—According to Mr Gait a small body of Hindu outcastes, whose degraded position is said to have been due to a cat (Assamese '*mekuri*') having stolen some food from Muhammadans and dropped it accidentally into rice which was eaten by a party of Hindus before the pollution was discovered These persons were excluded both from the Hindu and Musalman *communities, and were compelled to form a caste of their own. Many Mekuris are said* to return themselves as Nadiyals. The caste is only found in Darrang

1901 — — — 19
1891 — — — 4

Mikir (A)—A tribe who are found in most of the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley and the Assam Range, though their great centre is to be found in the Jamtia Hills, and the hills which bear

1901 — — — 81,288
1891 — — — [illegible]

their name in the Nowgong and Sibsagar districts They are a very timid people, amongst whom Hinduism has made little progress I have received an interesting account of the Mikirs from the Revd P H Moore, which I have made over to the Superintendent of Ethnography The decrease in their numbers is due to *kalá ázar* in Nowgong

Caste.

Miri (A) —There can, I think, be little doubt that the Miris are, as they allege, closely connected with the Abors, that they were originally settled in the hills to the north-east of the Province, and that they migrated to the plains to escape from the oppression of their more powerful neighbours Like most of the hill tribes, they live in houses built on bamboo *changs*, which are generally situated on the banks of a river Their principal crops are *ahu* rice and mustard, they still adhere to the nourishing meat diet and rice beer of their ancestors, and it is owing to this no doubt, and to the practice of adult marriage, that they have so long resisted the enervating effects of the climate of the plains Both men and women are sturdy and well built, with clear fair complexions, which at times are positively ruddy, and features which, though of a distinctly Mongolian type, are by no means unpleasing They speak Assamese, the *lingua franca* of the valley, with a curious mumbling accent, and experience as much difficulty in pronouncing the letter 'h' as the veriest cockney

1901	46 720
1891	37,430

In the report for 1881, it is stated that the Miris are divided into two large endogamous sections, the Barogams and the Dohgams, the Barogams being further subdivided into two exogamous groups, the Pegu and Dore, and into certain *khels* which seem to be purely local groups, while the Dohgams are divided into seven exogamous sections Mr Clark, the Subdivisional Officer of Jorhat, where there is a considerable Miri colony, informs me that the old exogamous and endogamous restrictions are gradually disappearing, and that there is a growing tendency to look to a Hindu Gosain for guidance in matters matrimonial With one exception (the khalassi Miris, who are the descendants of slaves released by the British Government, with whom other *khels* will not intermarry), the *khels* seems to be of no importance in the internal economy of the tribe, the '*kul*,' consisting of persons who claim descent from a common ancestor in the male line, and of which there are a large number, being the exogamous group

Both in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, the tribe has come largely under the influence of Hinduism, and though they still decline to give up their fowls and pigs, buffalo flesh and liquor, they no longer eat beef, and fines imposed by the Gosains for breaches of their orders are generally paid without demur In Sadiya, however, I found a healthy spirit of revolt against the restrictions of Hinduism The Gam of a Miri village told me that, though they had refrained from eating cow or monkey, or with Musalmans or Bengalis, at the instance of the Assamese Hindus, the latter still declined to mix with them in any way or to give them access to their houses This arrangement struck the Gam as being of a very one-sided character, and as he failed to see what advantage he was gaining from the restrictions imposed by the Hindus, he was seriously considering the desirability of reverting to the freedom of his ancestors Where they are not Hindus, the Miris are pure Animists, worshipping and sacrificing to the sun, moon and earth I have received a very interesting account of the Miris on the North East Frontier, from Mr F J Needham, C I E , which I only refrain from publishing, as it will be more in place in the ethnographic survey of the province

Each successive census has shown a very large increase in the number of the Miris, so that it is evident that there must be continual immigration from the hills

Mirshikari (S) —A functional rather than a caste name, denoting a low class of people, generally Muhammadan, who live by hunting The title is practically confined to Sylhet

1901	402
1891	173

Mishmi (A) —A tribe on the North-East Frontier of Lakhimpur supposed by Colonel Dalton to be akin to the Miaoutes or aborigines of Yunnan, whereas their neighbours, the Abors, are more closely allied to the Tibetan stock

1901	98
1891 ..	217

Moghul —A Muhammadan race who, according to Mr Ibbetson, probably entered the Punjab with Babur or were attracted there during the reigns of his descendants

1901	805
1891 ..	2,120

Moran (A) —According to Mr Gait, a distinct tribe, but the Lakhimpur officers describe them as an offshoot of the Matak sect The great decrease in their numbers is presumably due to the majority of Morans having returned themselves as Moms

1901	125
1891	5,812

Moria (A) —The descendants of Muhammadan prisoners taken captive when Turbul was defeated and killed at Silghat in 1510 A D. They were employed in various capacities for which they proved

1901	1,235
1891	1,081

Caste. themselves to be quite unfitted and were finally made braziers. During their captivity they became very lax in their observance of the ordinances of the Moslem religion, and were in consequence much looked down upon by other Muhammadans a fact which explains the steady decrease in the numbers of the caste At the present day Moria seems to be almost synonymous with brazier 193 Moirs having returned themselves as Hindus. The majority were censused in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur

Muchi.—The leather dressing caste of Bengal According to Mr Risley they were in all probability originally a branch of the Chamars though they now profess to look upon the latter as a separate and inferior caste. The social position of Muchis is very low and 5 191 were censused on tea gardens.

1901	– –	13,890
1891		10,397

1901	– –	614
1891		0

Mudi.—A title used by Binds Bagdis, Koras and Oraons, 473 were found on tea gardens

Mukhi (A)—A small caste practically confined to Kamrup whose traditional occupation is lime burning It has been suggested that they are a sub-caste of the Koch, but it is doubtful whether this view is correct According to Mr Gait they are a clean Sudra caste, whose water is taken by Brahmans but it seems doubtful whether good Brahmans will take water from their hands, though they will consent to act as their priests

1901	– – –	8,403
1891		8,361

Munda.—A Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur largely employed as coolies; 56,987 were censused on tea gardens The great majority of Mundas in Assam returned themselves as Hindus.

1901		60,022
1891		24,412

Murmi.—A Nepalese caste whose traditional occupation is cultivation, though a certain number are serving in the Military Police Battalions of the province.

1901		128
1891		42

Musahar—According to Mr Risley a Dravidian cultivating caste of Behar connected with the Bhuiya. Their social status is very low 12,339 were found on the tea estates of the province

1901	– –	12,777
1891		14,097

Nabasakh—The Nabasakh are the clean Sudra castes in theory* nine in number who have a Srotriya Brahman for their priest and from whom a Brahman will take water They are the Goala, Malakar Teli Tanti Mayara Barui Kumhar Kamar and Napit

1901	–	86
1891		0

Nadiyal (Dom Patni) (P)—The fishing caste of Assam who in occupation and status seem to correspond to the Jaliya Kaibarttas of Bengal. They are cleanly in their habits and very particular in their observance of the Hindu religion They strongly object to the use of the term Dom as they are afraid of being confounded with the sweeper caste of Bengal but it was impossible to sanction their request to be allowed to return themselves as Jaliya Kaibarttas as there is no doubt that as a caste they are perfectly distinct from the Kaibartta or Kewat though their manners and customs seem to correspond to those of the Jaliya Kaibartta in Bengal They have been called Doms for many centuries and they explain this fact by saying that they were the last of the Assamese to be converted from Buddhism This may or may not be true, but it seems more probable that they are members of the Dom tribe who emigrated to Assam before the Dom caste had been assigned the degrading functions now performed by them in Bengal In the social scale they rank apparently just above the Brittial Bamya. In Mangaldai they are said to be divided into three sections, the Mudi or traders the Kheoli or wholesale, and the Machua, or retail fish sellers.

1901	– – –	194,848
1891		206,063

The figures in the margin show the distribution by districts. The decrease in the total number is apparently due to Nadiyals in Kamrup and Sylhet returning themselves as Jaliya Kaibarttas. There has also been a great decrease in Nowgong but in this district there has actually been terrible mortality amongst the Dom villages 14,483 Doms were censused on tea gardens the majority of whom were probably members of the Bengali Dom caste and not Assamese Nadiyals.

	1901	1891.
Goalpara Plains –	45,776	88,128
Sylhet –	78,848	77,000
Goalpara –	1,847	1,018
Kamrup –	13,119	14,000
Darrang –	17,145	17,000
Nowgong –	15,000	20,000
Sibsagar –	15,019	14,000
Lakhimpur –	14,416	11,000
Other districts –	811	50
Province –	194,848	206,063

Naga (P)—I have included under this general head, the various Naga tribes found in the hills that bear their name and in North Cachar and Mampur The great increase in their numbers is due to the inclusion of figures for that State. Interesting accounts of the Naga tribe have been sent me by Captain Kennedy and Mr Noel Williamson.

1901	– – –	121,890
1891		104,048

Nagar—A small cultivating caste of Bhagalpur and the Santal Parganas.

1901	– – –	8
1891		0

* practice other castes such as the Sadgop, Sankhari, and Tambuli are included.

Caste

1901 498
1891 0

Nagarchi (S)—Muhammadans who act as drummers, 494 were censused in Sylhet

Nagbansi—A name used by Dosadhs, Tambulis, Mundas and others, 326 were censused on tea gardens

1901 370
1891 536

Nagesar—A small Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur who work as garden coolies

1901 58
1891 141

Naik—A title of Chamars, Mal Paharias, Kharias, Ghasis, and many other castes, 138 were found on tea gardens

1901 163
1891 0

Naiya—A small Dravidian caste of Bhagalpur, 144 were censused on the tea plantations

1901 176
1891 0

Namasudra (Chandal) (P)—A fishing and boating caste, who according to Manu are sprung from the illicit intercourse of a Sudra man with a Brahman woman, and are thus the lowest of the low

1901 ... ... 189 570
1891 ... ... 180 539

Like some of the other humble Hindu castes, the Namasudra is to all but Hindus by no means an unpleasing character Dr Wise describes him as "one of the most loveable of Bengalis He is a merry, careless fellow, very patient and hardworking, but always ready, when his work is done, to enjoy himself" The figures in the margin show the distribution by districts The decrease in Sylhet is probably due to the omission of the prefix by well-to-do Namasudras

	1901	1891
Cachar Plains	13 450	12 268
Sylhet	132 307	140 308
Goalpara	6 670	7 005
Kamrup	10 618	13 070
Nowgong	5 290	6 245
Other districts	1 223	1 637
Province	189 570	180 539

Napit (S)—A clean Sudra caste of barbers from whose hands Brahmans take water, which is included amongst the Nabasakh Their services are indispensable to the orthodox Hindu, a fact which is said to make them somewhat independent in their manners They are indigenous in Sylhet, but in the Assam Valley Napits generally belong to the Kalita caste

1901 33,310
1891 ... ... 32 089

Nat (P)—The dancing caste of Bengal Nat boys are in great requisition in Sylhet, for what is called the *Ghatu's nautch* A boy is hired by a village on a salary ranging from Rs 30 to Rs 60 per mensem to perform to them every evening The *Ghatu* is treated as a pet by the young people, with results that do not conduce to the elevation of his moral character, or theirs In Assam the Nat is usually a Kalita

1901 ... ... 5 000
1891 ... ... 4 201

Newar—A Nepalese tribe famous for their skill in agriculture

1901 657
1891 500

Nora (A)—A small Shan colony found in the Sibsagar district The decrease in their numbers seems to be due to many of them having returned themselves as Shan, or simply as Buddhists

1901 143
1891 716

Nunia—A Dravidian caste of Behar and Upper India, who come to this province to work as navvies The large increase in their numbers is due to the construction of the Assam-Bengal Railway and the Dhubri extension

1901 ... ... 16 850
1891 ... ... 6 003

Oraon—A Dravidian tribe of Chota Nagpur, much in request as coolies According to Mr Risley, their social status is very low, as they are most promiscuous feeders, 13,139 Oraons were censused on tea gardens

1901 ... ... 23 801
1891 ... ... 17 736

Oswal—A wealthy and respectable trading caste of Behar and Upper India, The great majority were censused in the Assam Valley, where they are known under the generic name of Kayah

1901 ... ... 1 453
1891 ... ... 1 353

Pahari—A name used by both Ghasis and Saraogis As 2,147 Paharis were censused on the tea gardens, they probably belonged to the former caste

1901 ... ... 2 204
1891 913

Paik—A title of Goalas, Khandaits, Pods and other castes The Paiks censused in Assam were garden coolies

1901 113
1891 0

Paliya—A Dravidian cultivating caste of Northern Bengal, only found on tea plantations in this province

1901 17
1891 0

Pan—A low weaving, basket making and service caste of Chota Nagpur and Orissa Their social status is very low, as they eat beef and pork Pans come to this province as garden coolies The decrease in their numbers is probably due to Pans having been classified as Mundas and Santals, as some of the sub castes of Pans have the same name as certain sub-castes of Santals and Mundas

1901 ... ... 7 673
1891 ... ... 20 166

Caste.

Pasi.—A Dravidian caste of Behar employed chiefly in the Surma Valley as garden coolies. Brahmans will not take water from their hands

Patia (A)—An Assamese caste which is practically confined to the Nowgong district where they are said to rank immediately above the Halwa Kewat Elsewhere they would be placed below that caste. Their original occupation was mat making, but they are said to have abandoned it for agriculture.

Patial (S)—A functional name used by mat makers in Sylhet, where they manufacture the well known *sitalpati* and in Goalpara, where the majority of Patials were returned.

Pator—A title of Pods, Tantis Mal Paharias, and several other castes 1 056 were censused on tea gardens

Patwa.—Makers of silk strings and fringes; 706 were censused in Kamrup

Patwari.—A title apparently used by coolie castes, as 29 were censused on tea gardens.

Phakial (A)—A Shan tribe who migrated to the Lakhimpur district from Mungkong towards the end of the 18th century Some of them seem to have returned themselves on the present occasion simply as Buddhists.

Pod—A boating and fishing caste of Bengal.

Poi.—A Lushai clan the name was only returned from the Lushai Hills.

Pradhan.—A title of Chamars, Santals, and numerous other castes.

Rabha (A)—A section of the Bodo tribe closely akin to the Kacharis to whom however they profess to be a little superior The majority of Rabhas are found in Goalpara Kamrup Darrang, and the Garo Hills The bulk of the tribe is still Animistic.

Rai.—A title of numerous castes ranging from the Brahman to the Jugi. In 1891 the second caste column made it possible to classify these persons under the proper head.

Rajbansi (A)—According to Mr Gait the Rajbansi is a Koch or Mech, who has assumed that title on conversion to Hinduism. 115 785 Rajbansis were censused in Goalpara. Like most persons who do not feel quite sure of their position they are very particular in matters of etiquette, and are keen advocates of infant marriage.

Rajbhar—An up-country caste, employed chiefly in the Surma Valley as garden coolies they rank with Kolns and Kurmis.

Rajgiri—A title used by Kandus and Sonars. In Assam they are garden coolies.

Rajput.—The military and landholding caste of Northern India, who claim to be the modern representatives of the Kshatriyas.

Raju—I can find no mention of this caste in any book, though the name has been returned at the last two censuses.

Rajwar—A Dravidian cultivating caste of Behar Western Bengal and Chota Nagpur They eat fowls, but not beef and pork and so claim to rank above the Bauris 4 735 were censused on gardens.

Rana.—A title of the Bhar Mayara and other castes.

Raut.—A title of Chamars Dosadhs, and many other castes.

Rautia.—A cultivating caste of Chota Nagpur According to Mr Risley Brahmans will take water from their hands but this distinction would I should imagine hardly be accorded to the Rautias of Assam who work as garden coolies.

Sadgop—A cultivating caste of Bengal, which is included in the Nabasakh; 94 were censused on tea gardens.

Caste

Saiyad (P) —A branch of the Muhammadan community who claim descent from Ali, son-in law of Muhammad They occupy a good position in society

1901 .. .. 10 647
1891 12,127

Saloi (A) —A cultivating caste of the Assam Valley Very few Salois are, however, found outside the Kamrup district, where they are said to rank above the Shahas and below the Kewats A subdivision of the caste called the Pat Salois rear the *pat* worm and the ordinary Salois decline on this account to intermarry with them * They are a clean Sudra caste

1901 .. .. 8 500
1891 9,356

Sankhari —The shell-cutting caste of Bengal Brahmans take water from their hands

1901 .. 50
1891 .. 10

Sannyasi —According to Mr Risley, a religious group of Jogis

1901 .. 664
1891 .. 361

Santal —A large Dravidian tribe in great request as garden coolies

1901 .. .. 77 680
1891 .. .. 23 220

Saraogi —A mercantile caste of Upper India, allied to the Oswals and Agarwals

1901 .. 270
1891 .. 240

Only 2 were censused in the Surma Valley

1901 .. 106
1891 .. 101

Sarki —The cobbler caste of Nepal

Sarnakar(S) —The goldsmith caste of Bengal I have included under this head the Sonar, which is the corresponding caste in Behar The decrease in their numbers is possibly due to Brittial Baniyas having returned themselves as Sonars in 1891, 732 Sarnakars were censused on tea gardens Their social position is low, and Brahmans will not take water from their hands

1901 .. .. 2 762
1891 .. .. 4 000

Savar —A Dravidian tribe of Orissa, Chota Nagpur, Madras and the Central Provinces, who are employed as garden coolies in Assam

1901 832
1891 .. 684

Shaha (P) —According to Mr Risley, a sub-caste of Sunris, who have given up their traditional occupation of selling wine and taken to other professions Theoretically, their position is very low, and there is a saying amongst Bengalis to the effect that if a Sudra be walking down a narrow lane with only Sunri houses on each side, and an elephant approaches, he ought to allow it to trample him under foot rather than take refuge in a house of one of the accursed In Kamrup, however, Shahas, or Shaus as they are called, have succeeded in getting Brahmans to take their water, and serve as their priests, and in Sylhet many Shahas enjoy positions of wealth and influence and obtain both bridegrooms and brides from amongst the higher castes, though the latter of course sink to the level of the caste into which they have married The figures in the margin show the distribution of the caste by districts

1901 .. .. 51 100
1891 .. 51 071

	1901	1891
Cachar Plains	1 052	1 038
Sylhet ..	34 400	31 041
Goalpara	1 198	593
Kamrup	14 080	16 423
Nowgong ..	122	1 009
Other districts ..	311	1 269
Province ..	51 100	51 071

Sheikh (P) —The usual title of an Arabian Muhammadan, which has been adopted by converts in Assam

1901 .. 1 493 700
1891 1,381 804

Solanemia (A) —According to Mr Gait, a small caste of Bodo origin, who rank above ordinary Kacharis, and are on much on the same level as Rabhas and Saraniia Koches They are only found in Darrang

1901 107
1891 .. 271

Subarnabanik —A mercantile caste of Bengal Proper Theoretically, their position is low, and Brahmans do not take their water.

1901 101
1891 19

Sudra (S) —A generic term, which can be used by any Hindu, who is not one of the three twice born castes In Sylhet, however, there is a distinct Sudra caste which has no other name They are the servants, and were once the slaves, of Kayasthas, Brahmans and Baidyas The Halwa Das were allowed to return themselves as Sudra Das, and many seem to have simply entered Sudra

1901 .. .. 46 326
1891 .. 7 068

Sudra Das (S) —A title used by the Halwa Das, as they object to the expression Halwa

1901 .. .. 21 220
1891 0

Sunri —The liquor-distilling and selling caste whose position is naturally very low, 1,039 were censused on tea gardens

1901 .. .. 3 131
1891 100

Sunuwar —A cultivating tribe of Nepal The majority were censused in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur

1901 .. .. 1 002
1891 .. 91

* According to Mr Gait, the Pat Salois [illegible] tea [illegible] they do [illegible] intermarriage with Bengal I do not know [illegible] of the [illegible]

Caste.

Surahiya.—A boating caste of Behar 374 males and no females were censused in Sylhet. They were probably boatmen from Bengal

Sutradhar (P)—The carpenter caste of Bengal where they rank with Jugis and Sunris. They seem to be indigenous in Goalpara and Sylhet.

Synteng (A)—The inhabitants of the Jaintia Hills who are closely allied to the Khasis. The decrease in their numbers is probably due to conversions to Christianity

Tambuli—A respectable trading class of Bengal who are usually classed amongst the Nabasakh 98 were censused on tea gardens where they were presumably employed as clerks or shop-keepers as the Tambuli will not touch the plough.

Tanti—The weaving caste of Bengal and Behar In Bengal their position is good and they rank amongst the Nabasakh but this is not the caste in Behar from which place in all probability the majority of our Tantis come, as 16 113 were censused on tea gardens.

Tarkhan.—A carpentering caste of the Punjab

Tatwa.—A weaving caste of Behar

Teli (S)—The oil-pressing caste of Bengal They are indigenous in Sylhet where 30 312 were censused In Bengal the higher sub-castes of Telis are included in the Nabasakh; but this is not the case in Behar from which place the 6 854 Telis censused on the tea gardens have probably come.

Telinga.—Probably Telaga or Telugu castes of Madras.

Thakur—A synonym for Brahman and a title used by Hajams, Lohars and other castes. All the Thakurs found in Assam were Buddhists.

Thami.—A subdivision of the Khas tribe of Nepal.

Thapa.—A subdivision of Magars and other Nepalese tribes.

Tharu.—A Non Aryan tribe of Behar and Upper India. The majority of Tharus were censused in Goalpara and North Cachar where they were probably working as railway coolies

Tipperah (S)—The Tipperahs are supposed to be a section of the great Bodo tribe. Those censused in Sylhet are probably immigrants from the neighbouring hills or their descendants

Tiyar—A fishing caste of Bengal, who are usually looked upon as impure 152 were censused on tea gardens.

Tokar (A)—A small agricultural caste of Kamrup and Darrang, who are said to rank below the Jugi and above the Hiras. Their origin and the caus of their degradation are obscure.

Totia (A)—A superior section of Kacharis fo nd in the Kamrup district who occupy an intermediate position between the Kachari and the Koch They are said to be abandoning pork and fowls as articles of food but they still take liquor

Turaha.—A sub-caste of Kahars and Nunias.

Turi.—A non-Aryan caste of Chota Nagpur, largely employed as coolies in Assam; 10,354 were censused on tea gardens. Their social position is low

Turung (A)—A settlement of Shans in the Sibsagar district who entered the province about eighty years ago

Udasi.—A title of religious mendicants.

Ukhar—A group of the Aoghar sect of Sivaite ascetics.

Vaisya (A)—A caste of Eastern Bengal claiming to be the modern representatives of the Vaisyas of Manu In the Surma Valley they are foreigners, but in Kamrup there is an indigenous caste of this name, who are cultivators and do not wear the sacred thread

Yakha.—A small agricultural caste of Nepal

NOTE on the Lushais by Major SHAKESPEAR, C I E, D S O, Superintendent of the Lushei Hills.

Composition of the population—The population of the district is, with the exception of a very few immigrants, all of one race The people, however, recognise a number of divisions and subdivisions My enquiries have led me to the conclusion that each of these divisions and subdivisions bears the name of some famous man who distinguished himself in former days, and from whom the majority of those bearing the name now are descended (or the whole of a family may have adopted the name of some very distinguished member) Old men tell me that, in their father's time the various clans lived in separate villages ruled over by Chiefs of their own clan Prominent men in each clan founded families which were called after them, and these families have been further subdivided as in course of time other prominent men have arisen, whose descendants were proud to adopt their names In each case the connection with the original clan is carefully preserved, thus a man will say that he belongs to the Lian-nghor branch of the Pachuao family of the Lushei clan

Caste

During the last 200 years these clans have been very much broken up, and in some cases there is much difficulty in finding out whether a name is that of a clan or only of a family In some cases the clan had formerly a separate corporate existence, which was broken up so long ago that its few remaining members, living among other clans for so long, have been practically absorbed This tendency of the clan to disappear has been increased by the extraordinary way in which certain Lushei families have come to the front and have asserted a claim to be Chiefs, and have got this claim recognised, not only by the Lusheis, but by almost all the other clans as well At the present time nearly every village is ruled by a Chief of one of the five royal Lushei families, it is therefore only natural for members of less distinguished clans to try to get themselves recognised as Lusheis The amount of variation between the different clans is by no means constant The Ralte, Paithe, Thado and Lakher are easily distinguishable, and a very brief acquaintance with them would make it apparent that they were not Lusheis, and the same applies to the clans which have been grouped under the names of Hmar and Poi The remaining clans are so much alike that one might live a long time in the hills without being aware that there were any differences between them It may be as well here to explain what the people themselves consider the marks of a different clan The most important is the method of performing the domestic sacrificial ceremonies This is almost conclusive proof that these clans are really only enlarged families The other sign of a difference of clan is a difference in dialect, but in many cases the dialect has been lost entirely, while the sacrificial rites have been kept intact It was manifestly both impossible and unnecessary to classify the population according to all the minor divisions, and therefore I directed that the population should be grouped under the following 15 heads

Lushei,	Ralte,	Paithe,	Pante,	Ngente,
Khawlhring,	Kiangte,	Roite,	Renthlei,	Chongthu,
Thado,	Lakher,	Darlong,	Poi,	Hmar

With the exception of Poi and Hmar, all these are true clan names Poi is the term used by the Lusheis, and other original inhabitants of the present Lushai Hills district, for all the people living in what we call the Chin Hills, except one or two small communities Among these Pois or Chins there are a great many clans and families, and I was unable to collect information about them all, nor did my enumerators know enough to enable them to distinguish them, and I therefore decided to adopt the custom of the district and classify all these people as Poi Regarding them and their customs, I propose to say but little, as they are merely immigrants from the Chin Hills, and will be fully dealt with in the Census Report of that district

Hmar, which means 'north,' is used by the rest of the inhabitants of the district to denote immigrants into the district from the Manipur State These mostly belong to clans which are very closely allied together, and speak much the same dialect, but I was unable to find a more suitable name under which to group them

Of the remaining 13 divisions into which I divided the population, all except the Ralte, Paithe and Lakher are becoming more and more alike every year

The rise of the Lushei Chiefs—Some 200 years ago there lived a man, Thangurra by name who distinguished himself above his fellows and became a powerful Chief, and to him all the present Chiefs trace their pedigrees At Thangurra's time there is but little doubt that the hills were dotted over with little hamlets, in which lived people all more or less closely connected Thangurra's descendants, by their prowess in war and wisdom in governing, gradually established their rule from one end of the hills to the other, and their authority now is undisputed, even by the other clans The most powerful branch of Thangurra's family is the Sailo so named from Sailova In old correspondence, the Sylu tribe is frequently spoken of By this term was meant the villages of Chiefs of the Sailo family, these villages frequently containing hardly any Sailo except the Chief and his family

General description of people and their mode of life—As I have already stated, the people of this district are undoubtedly all of the same race They are distinctly Mongolian Though the different clans have various customs, yet even between those that vary most there is a strong resemblance I propose now to briefly describe the manner of life of the majority of the people, and then to point out in what respects that of different clans varies from it

Caste.

General appearance.—The race is distinctly a short one, the men being from 5 feet 2 to 5 feet 6, while the women seldom reach 5 feet 2 Both men and women are stoutly built and have very muscular legs The men seldom have any hair on their faces, and if a man can grow a moustache he generally pulls out all the hairs except those growing at the corners of his mouth. The women pierce their ears when young, and insert discs of baked clay which are continually increased in size till the lobe of the ear is distended, so that a ring 4 inches in diameter can be inserted In this hole an ivory ring is worn. O a woman being left a widow she removes her earrings, and she also definitely gives up all idea of remarrying he lets the lobe of her ears. The men sometimes wear very small wooden or bone studs in the lobes of their ears.

The hair of both sexes is drawn straight back and tied in a knot behind In this knot pins of various shapes and materials are worn Widows wear their hair loose It is considered unwise for males who have reached the age of puberty to cut their hair as doing so is sure to bring on ill health.

All children run about naked for the first two or three years of their lives. The clothing of the men consists of a coat which reaches below the waist, but is only fastened at the throat, and single cloth which is worn th a—o e corne is held in the left hand and the cloth is passed over the left shoulder b hind the back under the right arm and the corner thrown over the left shoulder again. When wo ki g, or in h t weather the coat is generally dispensed with and the cloth imply rolled round th waist with the end loosely knotted hanging down in front. Men sometimes wear tu bans. Both body cl ths and turbans are generally white, but d rk blu cloths with coloured stripes are worn by th better-off people There is a particular pattern which only men who ha e killed two mithan to f ast the village are allowed to wear The women wear coats and cloths like th men and in addition short dark bl e petticoat reaching just to the knee. Both sexes are fond f ornam ts. Amber necklaces are very pop lar and some f these are valued very h ghly belog passed down fr m father to on through several gen ration R gh n cut cornelians are also much prized these are either worn n ecklace or suspended from the lobe of the ear

Constitution of society—The people live in villages, each of which is ruled by Ch f who is entirely ndependent. Even a young so will not admit his father right to influence him, afte he has once stabished a separ te village The Chief is supreme in his own village but the peopl are very democratic and have a very simple remedy if a Chief oppr sses them w to remove t another village. The Chief settles all dispute in th village, arranges where th *jhums* are to be and wh d when a village is to move. His bo is th poorhouse of th village and all rphan nd thers who have no means f support ar received there nd get food n ret rn for th ir labour Forme ly perso wh had committed some seri us crime could ent r th Chief's house and thus escape vengeance When a child has been brought p the Chief's house, it is i some respects a slave. Girls are released on marri ge but the Chief receives the marriag price Boys have t buy their release t the cost f a metna. A Chief sometimes buys wif for a f vourite sla and sets him p in a separate house and three ye rs aft the man will be considered free, but his children are sometimes considered slaves. The Chief' slaves re very well off they wear the Chief' ornaments d eat th best food to be g t, and d no more work than th y would have to do if th y were not laves.

Th Chief has several advisers, who are called Upa. They have the first choice of *jh m* land and sometimes th Chief allows th m to get bask t of rice from ach house. The other village ficials are the crier who goes round th village after dark, shouting out the Chief's orders th black m th, and the P i-thlam or sorceror who perf rms sacrifices in case f illness. These pe sons generally receive a donation of rice from each house f return for the services.

Th Chief receives from i t 5 baskets of rice accordi g t the quality of th *jhum* land assigned to the cultivator he also recei es hindquarter of every animal killed I the chase besides some other small dues.

Th re is a regular cod of punishments for different offences, the Chi f of course receivi g share of every fin levied.

The only sort of cultivation known is *jhuming* The chief crop is rice which ripens in November and Decembe th oth r important crop is maize which is reaped in August. Peas and beans f various kinds, and a certain mount of millet, are lso grown Th same piece of land is seldom cultivated two years running and this of course causes all the land within reach of th village to be q ickly cleared and then it becomes ecessary for the village to be moved to some ther site whence w land ca be *jh med*

Villages and houses—Villages are generally built on the top of ridge or spur and not on the slope of th hill, as is the custom among the China. The cause of this f think, is that the hills are higher i the cou try I had ted by the Chins, and therefore they can get healthy sites without goi g to the top of the idges. In former days the hoice of th village sit was much f fl enced by its defensive capabilitie the migratory habits of the people precluding their constructing the elaborat def sive works fo d round the Chin llages. Wh we fi st occupied th hills, very village was troogly stockaded two and even three rows of stockades bei g fo d in soa cas-s. The gateways were command d by timber block houses and at suitabl poi ts on the roads block house were bu lt, which w re occupied when ver there was ny fear of attack. The ground round the stockades and block houses was planted with sharpen d bamboo spikes which formed a very serious obstacle to barefooted fee

The villages are laid out in streets, all radiating from some central open spot fa i g which is the Chief's house, and the *nokhuk* or guest-house The houses are built on piles on the natural slope of the hill, and thus the floor of on house is often higher than the roof of the house below it.

The houses are all constructed in the same manner and on the same plan. At the end

nearest the road is a rough platform of logs which is the place for cleaning the dhan in On the front wall of the house over this platform are hung the horns of any animals the owner of the house may have killed, and among them are the baskets in which the hens hatch out their broods The doorway has a very high sill, and the door consists of a sliding panel of bamboo work The fireplace consists of an earthen hearth, in which three upright stones are inserted to hold the cooking pot, above this are two bamboo shelves on which articles which require drying are kept On each side of the fireplace are bamboo sleeping platforms, that furthest from the door being for the father and mother, the other for the daughters Beyond the family sleeping platform is a partition, the space between which and the end wall of the house is used as a lumber room and closet, from this a back door opens out on to a small platform The Chief's house only differs in size, generally having two rooms, the one nearest the entrance being for the use of the slaves Windows in the sides of the house are considered unlucky, unless the right to make one has been purchased by killing two metna and feasting the village The houses are built of timber uprights, but the walls, floor and roof frame are made of bamboo the thatching material used is generally cane leaves, but occasionally grass is used Over the cane leaves broad bands of split bamboo are tied down from eave to eave, giving the roof a rounded appearance from the outside A long coop under the eaves is the sleeping place of the fowls, who gain access to it by a ladder made of a knotched stick

Caste

The *Zawlbuk* is a large hall, with a huge hearth in the centre and a sleeping platform at the far end The front wall stops about three feet short of the ground, and to enter the building you have to stoop under this, and then climb over a barrier of equal height placed a few feet further in This building is the sleeping place of the young men of the village, and of any strangers who stop there the night It is also a sort of general meeting house The boys of the village have to keep up a sufficient supply of firewood for the *Zawlbuk* fire

In the centre of one of the streets will generally be found the blacksmith's forge, a small house, built on the ground level, but with a platform in front on which passers by can sit, and lighten the labours of the smith by their conversation The bellows consist of two hollow logs in which pistons are worked up and down, from the lower extremity of each log a tube runs to a hole in a stone placed immediately behind the stone on which the charcoal fire rests A very moderate movement of the pistons gives an excellent draught The blacksmith repairs all the tools of the village, but some of them are capable of a good deal more than this

Marriage—Each clan has a regular fixed price for its girls, and any one wishing to marry a girl must pay this price sooner or later The price varies from three metna to ten according to the clan The price is always stated in metna, but the actual articles given or the amount paid in cash is subject to arrangement The father or the nearest male relative on his side receives this price, but the bridegroom has also to pay many other persons The girl's aunt will get a sum varying from Rs 40 to Rs 5, the elder sister gets a small sum for having carried the bride about when she was young The bride appoints a male and female friend or protector, and each has to be paid a small amount by the bridegroom The bride takes with her certain cloths and ornaments, but these remain the property of the girl's male relatives unless she has a child to inherit them, in which case an extra payment, varying according to the quality of the dowry, has to be paid The nearest male relative on the bride's mother's side has also to be paid a sum varying from Rs 40 to Rs 4 These sums are never paid at once,—in fact, many men never complete paying the price of their wives, and leave the debt to be cleared off by their children *

A young Lushai generally chooses his own wife, and sends a Palai, or ambassador, to her parents to arrange the details of the price to be paid These settled, the bride is escorted to her future husband's parent's house, by a party of friends, being pelted with dirt by all the children of the village The parents of the bridegroom receive the party with brimming cups of rice-beer, and when justice has been done to this, a fowl is produced by the bridegroom and slain by the Pui-thiam, or sorceror, who mutters certain charms over it Directly this is over, the bride and her girl friends retire, while the rest of the party indulge in a great feast the bridegroom having to provide a fowl for each of those entitled to a share in the price of the bride The following evening the bridegroom's mother goes and fetches the bride and hands her over to him at his house The following morning, the bride returns to her parent s house and spends the day there, this she continues to do for some time The bonds of matrimony are very loose If a couple do not get on they can separate by mutual consent, or if the husband does not like the woman he can simply send her back to her parents In both these cases he does not recover any part of the price he may have paid, and the recipient of the price is bound to support the woman till she is married again If the woman commits adultery, or leaves her husband without his consent, her relatives have to refund whatever they received on her account A widow is at liberty either to return to her own people, in which case her late husband s relatives take all his property and his children or she may continue to live in his house in which case she retains his property in trust for his children but should she indulge in an intrigue she is considered to be an adulteress, and her relatives have to pay back her price to her late husband s relatives who take all the property and also the children

Castes. his mother sisters, daughters and aunts a man may marry any woman he likes.

Ceremonies connected with child-birth.—After the birth of a child the mother must not go down to the spring nor wash her child in cold water till two fowls have been sacrificed. Seven days after the birth of the child the household spirit is appeased by the offering of a small chicken and seven packets of rice and vegetables, which are suspended under the ves During these seven days the spirit of the child is supposed to spend some of its time perched like a bird on the clothes or bodies of the child' parents who, for fear of injuring it have to keep quiet during this period Should they do any work and the child get ill, the cure is to make a coil of a certain creeper and at night, after the fire has been put out, to dip the child three times in all the coil. The parents give two feasts in honour of the birth of a child the first two days and the second nine days after its birth At one or the other of these feasts the nearest male relative on the mother's side gives the child its name. There are many other sacrifices connected with children and they differ considerably in different clans

Funeral.—All the tribes in the hills bury their dead eventually though some of them take some time over it After death the corpse is dressed in the best clothes available and fastened to a bamboo-frame in a sitting position If the deceased is a man his gun *dao* and spear will be placed beside him. A pig goat and dog are then killed and their flesh cooked and the all the friends and neighbours are fed to a great feast. Meat and drink are offered to the corpse too. The spirits of the animals slain are supposed to accompany the deceased to Mi-thi-khua, the dead men's village. Without this sacrifice the deceased's spirit cannot find rest. The dead are buried just outside the house in which they lived. The grave consists of a shaft about 4 or 5 feet deep, from which a tunnel is excavated long enough to receive the corpse. On the evening following the death, the corpse is placed in this grave the nearest male relative making a short farewell speech and asking the spirit of the dead to prepare things for those who will shortly follow Drinking is kept up throughout the funeral ceremonies. The bodies of members of the Chief's family and well-to-do persons of the more esteemed Lushe families are not buried so speedily instead of being placed in the grave they are placed in the log of a tree which has been specially hollowed out a lid is fitted on and the joints of the lid and the tree trunk is well plastered with mud. This lid is placed on the floor of the house and an earthen hearth is made alongside which a fire is kept burning day and night. A bamboo is passed through the bottom of the lid and the floor into the ground, this conveys away all the liquid matter The corpse is kept in this coffin for about three months, and all this time the nearest relatives sit beside it and feed the fire and drink rice-beer At the end of this time little but the bones is left. Some of these are buried but the skull and certain of the larger bones are kept in a basket which occupies a shelf opposite the fireplace in the house of the nearest relative whence they are taken and dressed up to the feast of the dead Should the first-born child within a year of his birth it will be buried without any ceremony and the house, subsequent children however early they may die, *will however be honour d with a regular funeral. On a death, the maternal uncle of the deceased* is entitled to sums varying from 8 to 20 rupees from the heir

Religion.—The Lushais and all other tribes in the hills believe in a supreme being who made the world he is known as Pathian, but is not thought to take much interest in the doings of people. Far more important to the average man are the numerous Ram-hual or demons who are supposed to inhabit every hill and dell, stream, and Khuavang, a spirit sometimes spoken of as the same as Pathian, but generally considered as less powerful, but more concerned with mankind. Every illness, every failure of crops is put down either to the influence of some demon or of Khuavang, and the whole of a hillman existence is spent in propitiating these spirits. The Pathian or sorcerer is supposed to know what particular spirit is the cause of the trouble, and what particular sacrifice will appease him. The number of these sacrifices, and the different ways in which they have to be performed, would fill thick book. Most of them the flesh of the animal killed is eaten by the sorcerer and his assistants, the least toothsome portions only being left for the demon Small figures representing human beings and animals are also offered to the demons. Besides these sacrifices there is a special sacrifice to the patron spirit of the hearth. This can only be performed by member of the clan, and the method of performing it varies less from clan to clan

The most generally accepted theory as to what happens after death, is that the spirits go to Mi-thi-khua but those men who have slain men or animals in the chase or have feasted the village are able to cross the Pail river to an abode of great comfort where there is plenty of food and drink to be got without any work As women can not go to war nor kill wild animals, and are not allowed to give feasts, they can only reach this happy land if their husbands take them. Existence in Mi-thi-khua is full of trouble and worry After a certain period one of those two abodes departed spirits, the spirit is again born as a hornet, and after a time assumes the form of water and if in the form of dew it falls on a man it is re-born in his child.

Festivals, etc.—I connection with the crops there are three feasts, called Chap-char Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut. The first is the most important, and is thought to ensure a good harvest It takes place about the time of sowing, and consists chiefly of drinking, the young men and girls dancing slowly round in circles holding each others arms, while people inside the circle ply them with rice-beer The Pawlkut is held after the rice harvest has been reaped. *It seems chiefly a festival for the children who dressed their best are* fed with meat rice and hard-boiled eggs. A good deal of rough play goes on the lads trying to force handfuls of food down the lasses throats. Mim Kut is held when the maize harvest is reaped and is of but little importance Mi-thi-rup tam, or dance of the dead is feast held in honour of the deceased members of a clan. I think it is only held by true Lushei clans. Besides the usual eating and drinking, the special feature is the carrying round of effigies of the forefathers the various persons giving the feast. In case the feast is given by a Chief, the bones of his

ancestors will probably be dressed up The effigies are all tied on to a square frame work, and this is carried about and danced up and down amid much shouting In the centre of the frame is a large effigy, intended to represent the first of the whole race After this dancing of the effigies has gone on some time, the eldest member of the clan present comes out of his house with a flagon of rice-beer and goes to each effigy in turn and whispers some words and pours a little of the beer into its mouth He so arranges as to come to his own particular ancestor last, and, after having given the beer, he dashes the flagon on the ground and, bursting into tears, runs into his own house The effigies, after being danced about a little more, are taken away by respective descendants

Caste.

A Chief sometimes has to sacrifice a metna for the benefit of the village After the Pu-thiam has muttered the proper charm over the animal and anointed it by blowing some rice-beer from his mouth over it, the Chief stabs it with a spear and then takes refuge in his house He is not allowed to cross any running water for a month after this sacrifice, and should he do so dire disasters will certainly follow

Beside these semi-religious feasts, there are various others which are given by people who wish to be thought well of These have to be given in a regular order, and when a man has given the whole series he is entitled to wear a cloth of a certain pattern and to have a window in the side of his house

Superstitions—Witchcraft—The Lushais are a very superstitious race They will not kill certain animals, because it is unlucky, and yet I cannot find any trace of totemism in this superstition The belief in witchcraft is universal, and people suspected of practising the black art were formerly killed, and portions of their livers given to their victims, with a view to effecting a cure Wizards are said to make clay images of their victims, and to stick spikes into them to cause sickness to those whom the figures represent To take up the impression of a person's foot in the mud and put it to dry over the fire is a sure way to cause sickness

Besides the regular wizards, there are a number of people whose spirits are supposed to have the habit of leaving their bodies and entering into the bodies of others and causing them much trouble It may here be noted that the common belief is that each person has three spirits One of these is called Khawhrin, and this is the one that sometimes wanders, the other two are spoken of as Thlarao, and one is supposed to be wise and one foolish, and the constant struggle between these two causes men's actions to be so unreliable

Weapons and warfare—Men of 60 and 70 years of age can remember the time when guns were hardly known, and fighting was carried on with spears and bows and arrows, but now-a-days the weapons of the people are flint-lock muskets, spears and daos, the last being evidently imitated from the Burmese dah, and called Kawlnam, which means Burmese knife The spears are very inferior weapons, about 4 feet 6 inches long, with iron blades, and iron spikes at the other end of the shaft to allow of the weapons being stuck in the ground The blades are attached to the shafts in a very inefficient manner The essence of warfare is surprise The greatest triumph that could be achieved was to surprise a village at daybreak, and dash in before the fighting men had time to make any resistance, then capture as many women and children as possible, load them up with their own property and get away before their relatives could organize a rescue party The practice of waylaying people cultivating was considered unfair, and the Pois, by steadily practising it, drove the other clans out of any part of the country they coveted Ambushing armed parties was regularly practised, but our experience has been that the ambusher was always so anxious to get off with a whole skin, that his fire was very apt to be ineffective A raiding party, even after a march of several days, would retire without firing a shot if the enemy were found on the alert

Hunting and snaring—All the hill men are very fond of fresh meat, and are clever at trapping game Long lines of rough fencing are run through the jungle, with small openings at intervals, in which snares are set Pheasants, jungle, fowl, etc, coming to one of these fences will always run along it till an opening is found, and thus get snared Porcupines are killed by a bamboo spear fastened to a sapling bent back like a spring and so arranged that it shall be released just as the animal is opposite the spear point Tigers are caught under a platform of heavy logs, which is supported in an inclined position by a strong cane passed over a cross piece held up by two uprights In a hole under this platform is placed a pig in a basket, on the tiger pulling at the basket, the heavy platform falls and squashes him, while the pig, being in a hole, escapes Deer, wild cats, etc, are caught in snares, a noose being arranged so that on the animals stepping in it a sapling to which the noose is attached, and which is held down in a bent position, is released, thus hoisting the animal up into the air The method of releasing the trap or snare is in all cases the same Two uprights are driven into the ground, and a crossbar securely tied between them near the top Near one end of a piece of string or rope is attached a piece of wood, one end of this is placed under the crossbar, and the other end is pressed down till it passes between the two uprights, then a loose piece of wood is passed across the upright under it The other end of the string supports the weight which is to fall on the animal or is tied to the bent sapling All the pressure is on the upper crosspiece, which is securely tied The bait is tied to the lower crosspiece, or a piece of string tied to this crosspiece is fastened across the path A very slight pressure will suffice to displace this lower crosspiece, and directly that happens the string is released and the weight falls or the sapling flies up

Musical instruments—Gongs and drums, the latter the common tom tom, are the favourite instruments A reed instrument is made by inserting reeds into a gourd The reeds have finger holes, by crossing and opening of which while blowing it to the gourd by another reed a regularly graded scale of notes can be produced

Agricultural implements—These are very simple and consist of a dao, an axe and a hoe The dao is a knife with a triangular blade, about 3 inches wide at the end and half an inch at the

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handle It is ground with a chisel edge, the broad end being also sharpened. This is used for clearing the jungle and th broad end i used for grubbi g the holes i which the seeds are placed The axe heads are only about 1½ inches wide at the edge a d taper almost to a point; the ha dles re imply pieces of bamboo, the heads b ing thrust through the tough root portion. The bows very closely resemble the axes the head being a little lighter and broader

Arts and trades.—The women are very clever t weavi g, and the cloths they make are trong and last a lifetime. The patterns they work are mple. The cotton sed is grown in the *jhums* and cleaned and spun by the women th selves. The men are xpert basket weavers *There are a very large n mber of different baskets each with its proper name and use.* Some very good mo kding i brass is occasionally come across, d some of th blacksmiths are very good workmen bei g ble to mak gun locks.

Inheritance.—*Among the Chiefs the custom has been that as soon as a son married he should be given a certain number of houses and started as an independent Chief* His father would also give him some of his possessions, such as guns, necklaces, etc., and send some of hi most trusted sl ves with him. The youngest son was an xception to this rule, he remained with his father till his death, and thus became his heir Much the sam custom is followed among the common people each son as he marries settling up house for himself and receiv g som of the family possessions, d it has th s become the custom for the youngest to tak the father s property The eldest son, however som times assert a claim to a hare Custom among the people I these hills is not very stable and on a man s death practically any r lative can take his good li he will od rtak to support th w dow and the children, providing that the widow does not elect to conti e to live in her husband' house, and that the children are not old enough to support themsel es

Tattooing—The only marks I have noticed are circles, which are said to be records of love affairs.

Circumcision.—Is not practised.

Snake worship—I have found no special traces of any worship but R lpi. The big snak figures frequently in the f lklore of the people

Deaths by violence or wild animals—Th victims are buried outsid the village but as far as I can gathe no disgrace is attached to such a death. I such cases no death d ty can be claimed by the maternal cle

Origin.—It is early universally believed that th ancestors of th present Inhabitants came out from a cave in the earth. The position of this cave is variou ly described. Nearly every clan will tell you that is first villages were on the bank of the Manip river but they m an thereby the first comm ities of which they have any traditions.

Head hunting—It used to be considered that all inhabita ts of these hills were head-hunters; I fact, so great a thority as Colonel Lewin derives the name Lu hai from 'Lu, ahead and aha, t cut. This is, of course, a mistake as th ame of the clan is not Lushai but Lushei, and though aha does mean to cut, it does ot mean t cut off *and could not be used of cutting off man head; but that such a mistake should have been* possible hows how firmly rooted was th belief that head-hunting was on of the peculiarities of the population of these hills. I believe that, as far as the Lush h d their kindred cl ns are concerned, head-hunti g was not ind lged i By this I mean that parties did not go out simply t get heads. Of course a ma who had killed his man was thought more highly of than on who had not, and therefore when a ma did kill a person he brought the head home to show that h was speaking the truth but the raid were mad not to get heads but for loot and slaves the killing and taki g of heads were merely ncidents i the aid ot the ca se of it. I think that the Chins or Poms are exception to this, and, as far as I ca gather the glory of bri ging in a head was sufficient to send a young man a d his f lend off on the raid

Clans who h d fler from the built of the population.—*I will now give briefly a few points* which certain clans diffe considerably from those to whom th above description generally applies

Rais—This clan speaks dialect which I very different from the Lushei or Dulian language which may be considered the *langua franc of the hills. They keep very to th together and are* now collecting in village nder headm of their own. I almost every cu tom they differ lightly from their neighbours. They bury their d ad outside the village and the Chiefs bury their dead, not preserving the bones as the Lushai chiefs do. The Rait are the most quarr l- some and talkative clan in the whol hills. Tradition says that whe mankind was issuing from the earth the Raites came out chattering so loudly that th stone was clapped down on them and therefore there are less Raites than other cla s.

I mode of dress, etc., they do not diff r from the other lans.

Ngente—The f llowing information has been collected by Mr Drake-Brockman

Child birth—Three months before her confinement a woman prepares rice-beer which i kept and drunk insid th house after the birth of the hild The third day after the child birth it is named by its maternal uncle red cock belog killed and some of the f thers tied roo d the child' ock, and also worn by the members of the family I the autum of each year there is f ast which lasts three days in honou of the children born during the year The first two ights the ad lt pop lation sit p all ight drinking and eating yams. The third day men, dressed as women and Pots, go from house to house visiting all who ha become mothers during the year and belog treated to drink and given some small present by each, in return for which they dance. Women are delivered at th head of the sleepi g *machan*; the after-birth is placed in a gourd and hang up on the wall at the back of the house.

Death ceremonies—The death are buried at once, and anywhere the relatives choose

Caste

Pois or Chins—There are many minor differences in feasts and customs Mr Drake-Brockman has supplied me with a good deal of information, but all the Pois in this district are merely immigrants from the Chin Hills I do not think it need be reproduced here, and will keep it for the ethnographical report

Lakhers—These people are also immigrants from the Chin Hills, but they seem different in many respects from the Pois Mr Drake-Brockman says that the name by which they call themselves is Tlongsai The eldest son inherits the bulk of the property Daughters only get what the brothers give them, younger brothers get a small share If there are no sons, the nearest male relative inherits The details of the price paid for brides differs somewhat from those given above There are no guest houses All members of the family sleep in the same house The Chief's bodies are buried five days after death People killed by animals or by accident, or women who die in child-birth, are buried outside the village, and ceremonies are abbreviated Such a death is an ill-omen Seven days after child-birth the mother washes at the spring, and then takes the child to her father's house, and gives some rice and a fowl in honour of the child No particular sacrifices are connected with child-birth Among the Lakhers there are no special sorcerers or priests, the head of the household is the priest, and does all necessary sacrifices Lakher villages, like Chin villages, do not move, and therefore are more permanent The dress of the people is the same as that of the Haka Chins

Paithes—When we first occupied these hills, a very large number of this clan were living in different villages of Lushai chiefs, having being brought there and detained more or less forcibly These have nearly all left now, and either returned to their own country, the Manipur Hills or settled in one or two villages under Paithe chiefs in the extreme north-east corner of the district The Paithe dialect is quite unintelligible to a Lushai Their marriage customs are very different A young Paithe cohabits with his future wife for a period which may extend to three years if no child is born During this time they sleep together, but otherwise live as if unmarried If no child is born, or rather if the woman does not become pregnant, the couple separate If the woman becomes pregnant the marriage is completed, and the price must be paid, and there can be no separation or divorce, as is so easily arranged among the Lushais There is very little intermarriage between the Paithes and the other clans, on account of the objection the Paithe women have to the casual way in which the males of other clans can get rid of their wives A Paithe chief's son is supposed to marry his first cousin After death the corpse is rubbed with some greasy preparation, which preserves and hardens the skin It is then dressed up in the best cloths obtainable, and a wonderful head-dress made of toucan tail feathers is placed on its head During the day time the corpse is kept in the house, but in the evening, when the people return from work, it is brought out and placed on the platform outside the house, and rice-beer is poured down its throat, and people sing and dance round it This disgusting performance is kept up for periods, which varies from a month or two to a year, according to the wealth of dead person's family The Paithes have many other peculiar customs, but I have had but little opportunity of studying them They have no guest houses, the young men sleeping in the front verandas of the Chief, and some wealthy men on special platforms For this privilege, they each give a pig or a goat once a year

Mr Dundas notes that the women's petticoats overlap in front instead of at the side, that the unmarried girls wear their coats opening down the back, and that they do not wrap a cloth round them as the men do The hair is dressed as follows A lock is drawn down over the forehead, and then plaited and drawn back over the centre of the head, and tied into the knot in which the rest of the hair is tied over the nape of the neck The women wear their hair in three plaits, one hanging over each ear and one down the back The Paithe seem very closely allied to the Syins of the Northern Chin Hill

The Hmar—Regarding these people, I have but little information There are many different clans, who are all known to the Lushais under this name, and who speak dialects very closely allied and unintelligible to the Lusheis They formerly had many wars with the Lusheis, and lived north of Champhai, they now mostly live in the Manipur hills The woman wear their hair in one long plait wrapped round the head, and instead of the blue petticoat worn by all other clans wear one with a blue stripe between two white ones, which overlap in front, and so, when seen from the front the petticoat appears white, and hence the whole clan is often spoken of as Pen ngo—white petticoats

The Thado—There is only one village of these people in the district They were driven out of the hills by the Lushais They are said to be descended from the same stock as the Chongthu They say their ancestor found his way from some underground cavern They place their dead in logs as described above and dry them, but do it in a small house outside the village

Conclusion—The above gives only a general idea of the customs of the inhabitants of the hills Every clan has some particular custom of its own, especially as regards sacrifices, which form a very important feature in the people's existence The customs as to punishment, paying of marriage price, etc, among people living under Lushai chiefs are practically the result of orders which the most powerful chiefs have given during their lives, and I find some differences between the customs of the northern and southern chiefs

Caste.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Hindu Castes by social precedence (Surma Valley)

Caste.	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Percentage of group on total population of Hindus.	Percentage of group on total population of All religions.	Remarks.
		3	4	5		
GROUP I.—TWICE BORN CASTES.						
Brahman	43,331	23,476	9,875	...	...	
Bhat	8,7	4,49	458	...	...	The majority of the Bhats have returned themselves as Kshatriyas (Khatri).
Total Group I ...	44,168	23,825	20,343	3·32	1·66	
GROUP II.—GOOD CASTES FROM WHOM ALONE BRAHMANS USUALLY ARE WORTHY.						
Baidya ...	4,206	2,212	1,994	...	...	
Kayastha ...	69,589	36,409	33,180	...	...	
Nabasakh, including (in alphabetical order):—						
Baniya ...	1,238	629	609	...	...	Twenty-eight persons returned as Nabasakh could not be distributed under any of these minor castes.
Barui	7,786	4,136	3,650	...	...	
Gandhabanik ...	1,086	592	494	...	...	
Goala	20,025	10,407	9,618	...	...	
Kamar ...	38,7	7,024	6,793	...	...	
Kumhar	14,828	7,508	7,314	...		
Mayara ...	932	481	451	...	...	
Napit	23,025	8,931	94	...	...	
Tanti	6,488	3,079	3,409			
Teli	33,485	6,820	5,665	...	...	
Sudra	45,70	22,039	23,531	...	...	
Das	70,977	36,600	34,377	...	...	The Das claim to rank just below the Kayastha, but so far as I can ascertain their claims are not admitted by other Hindus.
Halia Das	28,074	14,309	3,765		...	
Sodra Das	1,220	632	0,588	...	...	
Total Group II	37,6	90,368	8,243	27·97	3·98	
GROUP III.—CASTES FROM WHOM BRAHMANS DO NOT USUALLY ACCEPT.						
Gausak	5,73	2,944	2,787	...	...	Gausaks and Barna Brahmans are twice-born and wear the sacred thread, but have been placed in this group as their status is not accepted by Srotriya Brahmans.
Barna Brahman ...	2,703	1,446	1,257	...	...	
Mahara	3,483	1,448	2,035	...	...	
Sarnakar	1,063	535	528	...	...	
Shaha and Sonri	36,173	7,984	8,189	...	...	
Satradhar	3,917	1,910	6,007	...	...	
Kosari (Rarh) ...	1,388	596	789	...	...	
Dhoba	14,1 5	7,075	7,050	...	...	
Kalbartta	44,679	23,021	1,658	...	...	
Jugi	89,963	45,368	44,595	...	...	
Nadiyal (Patial)	14,022	57,828	56,194	...	...	
Dholi	9,227	4,994	5,233		...	
Namasudra (Chasdal) ...	145,766	74,198	71,568	...	...	
Bhuinmali and Mali	45,927	23,064	22,863	...	...	
Total Group III	539,64	267,50	261,063	39·84	19·91	

Caste

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I

Hindu Castes by social precedence (Brahmaputra Valley)

Caste	Persons	Males	Females	Percentage of group on total population of		Remarks
				Hindus.	All religions.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GROUP I—TWICE BORN CASTES WHO WEAR THE SACRED THREAD						
Brahman	57,144	31,581	25,563			
Ganak	14,791	7,125	7,666			The position of the Ganaks in Assam is much higher than that assigned to them in Bengal The Tulsi Jania Ganaks and those of Mangaldai are said to be held in comparatively low esteem
Total Group I	71,935	38,706	33,229	3 82	2 74	
GROUP II—GOOD CASTES FROM WHOSE HANDS BRAHMANS USUALLY TAKE WATER						
Kayastha . .	15,661	9,055	6,606			
Kalita	202,845	105,952	96,893			The functional subdivisions of the Kalita caste do not rank as high as this but they have not been shown separately in the census tables
Patia	2,461	1,185	1,276			In Nowgong, the only district in which this caste is found in any numbers, they are placed above the Halwa-Kewats Elsewhere they would apparently go just below that caste.
Kewat and Kaibartta	103,141	53,234	49,907			The functional groups would go lower
Saloi	8,565	4,142	4,423			The Jalia Kewat is looked on as little better than the Nadiyal
Koch	217,025	110,248	106,777			Brahmans only take water from Bor Koch The other divisions of the caste would fall in Group III
Rajbansi	116,982	59,411	57,571			
Shaha	15,562	7,647	7,915			
Total Group II	682,242	350,874	331,368	36·26	26 04	
GROUP III—CASTES FROM WHOSE HANDS BRAHMANS DO NOT USUALLY TAKE WATER						
Ahom ...	177,562	90,515	87,047			The caste, owing to the fact that the Ahoms were the ruling race in Assam, has a good position in Sibsagar The Ahom gentry wish to be styled Daitya kul Kshatriyas.
Nat	4,509	2,200	2,309			The Nat is usually a Kewat or Kalita
Mukhi	2,502	1,203	1,299			
Chutiya	85,487	43,668	41,819			
Jogi and Katani	71,053	35,564	35,489			
Bena	19,315	9,523	9,792			
Hira	8,701	4,082	4 619			
Nadiyal (Dom)	80,509	41,400	39,109			
Brittial Baniya	7,781	3 831	3,950			
Namasudra (Chandal)	23,541	12,278	11,263			This caste would probably desire to be placed higher in the scale but, as far as I can ascertain, their claims are not accepted by the leaders of Assamese society
Total Group III	480,960	244,264	236 696	25·56	18 36	

Caste.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in caste tribe and race since 1872.

Caste, tribe or race.	Persons.				Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (—).			Net variation, increase (+) or decrease (—).
	1901.	1891.	1881	1872.	1891-1901.	1881-91	1872-81	
	3	4	5		6	7	8	9
Abor ...	321	223	821		+ 43·9	— 72·8		— 500
Agaria ...	518	573		10	— 9·5			+ 508
Agarwal	4,182	2,323	2,383		+ 79·8	— 2·4		+ 1 799
Agrahari	28	6	..		+366·6			
Ahir ..	8,928							
Ahom	178,049	153 528	179,314	128,980	+ 15·9	— 14 4	+ 39·0	+ 49,069
Aiton	83	163		..	— 47 8			
Aka	28	14			+100·0	..	...	...
Amat	12	86		...	—86·0			..
American	45	24	..	18	+ 87·5		...	+ 27
Animistic unspecified	205	181	..	7 863	+ 13·2	..		— 7,658
Arme kan ...	7	9		3	— 22·2			+ 4
Assamese	1 098	948			+ 5 8	..	...	
Asura ..	1 205	513	..		+134·8		..	
Atit	47	37		..	+ 27·0	..	...	...
Australia	4	2			+100·0	..		..
Austrian ..	1	3	..	..	— 66·6		..	
Babhan	220	765			— 71·2		..	...
Badyakar ..	350				..			
Bagdi	9 09	8,094	5,015	2,347	+ 12·5	+ 60 4	+114·9	+ 6,762
Baidya	5 54	4 698	3 960	3,601	+ 9·7	+ 8·6	+ 9·9	+ 1,953
Bairagi	3,470	4,803	..		— 31·9		..	...
Bai hnab	30	860	...	18,229	+ 50·2		..	— 16 928
B niya	4,410	3,145	1,015		+ 4 1	+ 209·8	..	+ 3,425
Barbi ..	278	419		..	— 33·6	..	...	..
Barma Brahman	3,144	5,568			— 43 5			
Barmasankar	6							
Barua	18		..	..	..			
Baruí	18,488	22,581	4,429	15,728	— 18 1	+409·8	— 71 8	+ 2 760
Bauri	42,473	32 149	9,9 4	1 146	+ 32·1	+224·2	+765·0	+ 41,327
B varian					..			
Bediya	722	662		32	+ 6·2			+ 1 690
Behara	27			2,282				— 2,255
Bej	225							
Beldar ..	32	573		1,589	— 43·9			— 1 268
Bengali	26	202		253	+ 29·2			+ 8
Beuya	109	91			+ 9·7			
Bhakta ..	57							
Bha dari	55	48			+ 4 5		...	
Bhangi	7							
Bhar	13,265	6,389	..		+107·6		..	
Bhat ..	002	1 273	301	326	— 21 4	+323 5	— 7·6	+ 676
Bhatiya	1,068	24			+4,350·0			
Bhil	498	65		...	+666 1			
Bhiati	4							
Bhojperi							...	
Bhuiaba ...	61					...		
Bhuinmali	42,185	50,94		1,985	— 17·1			+ 40,200
Bhunya	49,447	32,186	5,218	3,269	+ 53·6	+516·8	+ 59·6	+ 46 178
Bh mij ..	34,259	20,632	25,439	1,014	+ 66·0	— 18·8	+2,408·7	+ 33,245
Bh tia	704	1 503	1,34	328	— 53,1	+ 12·1	+ 308 5	+ 376
Bind ...	3,113	1 921		12	+ 62·0		..	+ 3,101
Binjhia ...	279	139			+100·7			
Birhor	225	73	...		+208 2	..		
Bola ...	19,117	22 521	20,438	10,741	— 137	+ 10·1	+ 90·2	+ 8,676
Brahmachari	1			...		...	...	...
Brahman	109,446	97 001	119,075	105,901	+ 12·8	— 18 5	+ 12·4	+ 3,545

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in caste, tribe and race since 1872

Caste, tribe or race	Persons 1901	Persons 1891	Persons 1881	Persons 1872	Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (—) 1891-1901	1881-91	1872-81	No variation increase (+) or decrease (—)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Brahmo	360	69			+ 421 7			
British	17							
Brittial (Hari) Baniya	7,784			624				+ 463
Buddhist unspecified	1,087			344	+ 15,500			— 188
Burmese	156	1			— 50 0			
Canadian	2	4	853	6,834	+ 144 2	+ 1,996 0	— 87 5	+ 36,841
Chamar	43,675	17,879			+ 77 0			
Chasa	3,230	1,824						
Chaudhari	91				— 46 0			+ 11,837
Chero	95	176	8,860	5,535	+ 234 0	— 41 3	+ 60 0	+ 142
Chhatri	17,372	5,200		8	+ 2,900 0			— 41
Chinese	150	5		329	+ 772 7			+ 34,347
Chunari	288	33	60,232	51,482	— 2 1	+ 45 5	+ 16 9	
Chutiya	85,829	87,691						
Coolie	902		549	418	— 16 0	+ 107 1	+ 31 3	+ 536
Dafla	954	1,137						
Dami	295 } 660 }	1,021			— 6 9			
Darzi	71,092							
Das	23				— 54 7			
Dasnami	394	870						
Dehan	361							
Deori	697							
Deswali	1							
Dewan	104				— 33 4			+ 170
Dhai	195	293		212	+ 21 2			
Dhangar	382	315						
Dhanuk	3				+ 1,013 1			— 11,306
Dhari	423	38	35,211	30,350	— 21 6	— 30 9	+ 16 0	
Dhenuar	19,044	24,290			+ 6 3			+ 3,931
Dhobi	14,564	13,693			+ 29 2	+ 25 2		
Dhobi	10,278	7,951	6,347		+ 130 7			— 295
Dholi	30	13						
Dhunia	1,015	715		1,310	+ 41 9			
Dornia	13							
Dogra	9,761	7,226	4,263	1,309	+ 35 0	+ 69 5	+ 225 6	+ 8,452
Dosadh	1,105	1,381		386	— 19 9			+ 719
English	275	383 }	1,631 {	84	— 28 1 }	— 61 9	+ 1184 2 {	+ 191
Eurasian	177	237 }		43	— 25 3			+ 134
European	66	158			— 58 2			
Fakir	6	9		6	— 33 3			
French	7	1			+ 600 0			
Gadharia	278				— 13 4	— 0 7		— 3,379
Gain	20,535	23,739	23,914		— 76 4			+ 260
Ganak	460	1,955		3,630	+ 158 7			— 1,987
Gandapal	1,643	635			— 83 3			
Gandhabanik	1	6			— 50 0			
Gandhar	2	4						
Ganpota	2 472				+ 19 7			
Ganjhu	747	624		15,196	— 6 0	— 6 8	+ 637 7	+ 112,971
Garari	128,117	119,754	112,104	0	+ 57 1			+ 13
Garo	22	14						
German	2				+ 3 7			
Gharti	12,752	9,172		906	+ 551 1	— 32 7	— 20 6	— 20 1
Ghasi	21 677	3,320	7,947	10,780	— 53 1	— 12 7	— 20 7	+ 27,353
Ghatwal	38,282	31,089	13 020		+ 24 1			
Gosh	4,464	3 595						
Gond	81							
Gorait	1,548	1,533			+ 20 5			
Gorait								

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II.

Variation in caste tribe and race since 1872.

Caste. Caste, tribe or race.	Persons. 90	891	188	872.	Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (—). 1891 1901	183 -91	872-81	Net variation, increase (+) or decrease (—).
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gulgulia ..	1	20			— 95·0		...	
Gurung	2,070	1 193		..	+ 73·5	..		
Gurati ..	1		..	..	..			
Haijong ..	8,766	8 470	4,354	4,541	+ 3·4	+ 94·5	— 4 1	+ 4 225
Hajari	1 495	1,393		—	+ 7·3		..	
Halwa Das	29,161	143,536	102,426	—	— 79·6	+ 40		— 73,865
Halwai ...	1 028	932	1,013		+ 10·3	— 7·9		+ 15
Hari	4,890	13,620	11 534	11 124	— 64·0	+ 18·0	+ 3·6	— 6,234
Hindostani ..	13	13		281	...			— 269
Hindu unspecified	4,310	539	74,382	190,360	+ 699·6	— 99·2	— 60·9	—186,050
Hira	8,703	10,695			— 13·5			
Ho	103	22			+ 368·1			
Hojai	839	3 780	..	3,263	— 77·8			— 2,424
Irub	188			76				+ 112
Italian ..	1	2		3	— 50·0			— 2
Jain unspecified	47			..		...		
Jai	2							..
Jaiswar	176	2			+ 8,700·0	..		
Jaladha	5 090	6,311	2,795		— 19·3	+ 125·7		+ 2,295
Jat	176	51		..	+ 245·0			
Jew	1	5			— 80·0			
Jharua	61			..				
Jhora	202	117			+ 72·6			
Jundar	20							
Jolaha	1 734	2 180	2,872	2	— 20·4	— 24·0	+143,500·0	+ 1 732
Jugi	161 167	177 746	172,600	162,072	— 9·3	+ 2·9	+ 6·4	— 905
Jugli	64						..	
Kachari	259,865	243,378	286,329	219,414	— 4	— 15·0	+ 30·4	+ 20,451
Kadar	193	740			— 73·9			
Kahar	8,127	5,442	7 379	2 347	+ 49·3	— 26·2	+ 214·4	+ 5,780
Kalbartta ..	84,636	67,324	37 16	222,382	+ 25·7	+ 81 1	— 83·2	—137 746
Kalita	203 108	222,606	253,860	179,060	— 8·7	— 12·3	+ 41·7	+ 24,048
Kalwar ...	1,939	709			+ 178·2			
Kamar	33,744	29,654	11 702	8,087	+ 13·7	+153 4	+ 44·7	+25,635
Kami	270	20		..	+ 1325·5		...	
Kan	85							...
Kandh	1 783	175			+ 918 8		..	...
Kandu	2,610	2,329		...	+ 12·3			
Kanjar	42	8			+ 425·0			
Kansari	39	41	..	150	— 4 8			— 111
Kapali	970	1 122	3, 82	1,374	— 13 5	— 64·7	+ 131 5	— 404
Karanga	94	34		22	+ 76·4	..		+ 72
Kasai	83	6			+ 2833·3			
Kasera	1							...
Ka	249	198		...	+ 25·7			
Kawali ..	74	263			— 33·8			
Kayastha	86,918	92,395	185,561	105,634	— 5·9	— 50·2	+ 75·6	— 18,716
Kazi	36	..						
K wat	64,186	91 129	104,275	31,300	— 29·5	— 12·6	+ 233·1	+ 32,886
Khadal	1,624	255			+ 536·8		..	..
Khamba	270	117			+ 130·7			
Khamjang ...	1	35			— 97·1		..	
Khamti	3,975	3,040	2,883	1,583	— 35·0	+ 5·4	+ 82·1	+ 392
Khan ...	283	..		..		..		
Khandait	293	341		..	— 13·7			
Kharia ...	7,934	6,362	1 706	66	+ 20·9	+ 284·6	+2,484·8	+ 7,868
Kharwar	1,08	4,509	..	118	— 76·0			+ 963
Khas	506	96		..	+ 427·0	...		
Khasi ..	111,606	120,411	107,432	94,617	— 7·3	+ 12·0	+ 13 5	+ 16,989
Khatik	17	9			+ 88·8	...		..
Khatri	185,597	226	..	23,013	+82,022 5	..	...	+162,584

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in caste, tribe and race since 1872

Caste, tribe or race	Persons				Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (—)			Net variation increase (+) or decrease (—)
	1901	1891	1881	1872	1891-1901	1881-91	1872-81	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Khawas	155	111			+ 39 6			
Kiranti	10							
Kisan	723	418			+ 72 9			
Koch	221,721	254,934	243,541	313,040	— 13 0	+ 4 6	— 22 2	— 91,319
Koiri	11,152	5,800	3,067	812	+ 92 2	+ 89 1	+ 277 7	+ 10,340
Kol	18,428	2,704		1,522	+ 581 5			+ 16,906
Kora	3,584	4,669			— 23 2			
Korwa	2,348	786		187	+ 198 7			+ 2,161
Koshta	24	14			+ 71 4			
Kotal	52	15			+ 246 6			
Kuki	55,827	18,790	10,812	8,323	+ 197 1	+ 73 7	+ 29 9	+ 47,504
Kumhar	26,793	25,441	18,043	35,667	+ 5 3	+ 41 0	— 49 4	— 8,874
Kureshi	380	1,356			— 71 9			
Kuri	143			2,531				— 2,388
Kurmi	20,783	12,576	12,532	7,669	+ 65 2	+ 0 3	+ 63 4	+ 13,114
Kusiari	1,390	192	1,365		+ 623 9	— 85 9		+ 25
Laheri	44	22		9	+ 100			+ 35
Lalbegi	238	187			+ 27 2			
Lalung	35,513	52,423	47,650	34,859	— 32 2	+ 10 0	+ 36 6	+ 654
Lama	983	3			+ 32,666 6			
Lepcha	11							
Limbu	1,295	1,044			+ 24 0			
Lodha	249	18			+ 1,283 3			
Lohait Kuri	414							
Lohar	10,464	7,388			+ 41 6			
Loi	3,618							
Lushai	63,452	257			+ 24,589 4			
Madrasi	752	592		481	+ 27 0			+ 271
Magar	2,933	3,404			— 13 8			
Magh	172	13		1	+ 1,223 0			+ 171
Mahalia	1,335	5,612	6,202		— 76 2	— 9 5		— 4,867
Mahanta	483							
Mahara	3,678	6,262			— 41 2			
Mahesri	468	259			+ 80 6			
Maheshya Vaisya (Kewat)	2,837							
Mahili	5,701	3,606		6,819	+ 58 0			— 1,118
Mahimal	36,544	58,100			— 37 1			
Mal	4,435	1,604	16,876	7,669	+ 176 4	— 90 4	+ 120 0	— 3,234
Mali	7,870	1,054	48,651	39,350	+ 646 6	— 97 8	+ 23 6	— 31,480
Mallah	2,228	1,490	1,239	1,438	+ 49 5	+ 20 2	— 13 8	+ 790
Malo (Jhalo)	18,570	20,068	1,478		— 7 4	+ 1,257 7		+ 17,092
Mal Paharia	3,830	1,647			+ 132 5			
Man	282		282					
Manipuri	45,010	71,328	40,443	11,808	— 36 8	+ 76 3	+ 242 5	+ 33,202
Manjhi	8,401	4,766		171	+ 76 2			+ 8,230
Mar	20							
Marathi	16	3			+ 433 3			
Markande	19	18			+ 5 5			
Marua	3							
Marwari	528							
Matak	742	824	220		— 9 9	— 274 5		+ 522
Maulik	188	208			— 9 6			
Mayari	1,221	1,625			— 24 8			
Mech	74,922	70,201	57,890	29,958	+ 6 7	+ 21 2	+ 93 2	+ 44,964
Mehtar	1,587	748	648	770	+ 112 1	+ 15 4	— 15 8	+ 817
Mekuri	16	4			+ 300 0			
Mexican	1							
Mikir	87,335	94,820	77,765	59,798	— 7 0	+ 21 9	+ 29 0	+ 27,537
Miri	46,720	37,430	25,636	12,917	+ 24 8	+ 46 0	+ 84 2	+ 33,803
Mir Shikari	402	473			— 15 0			
Mishmi	98	217	681	226	— 54 8	— 68 1	+ 201 3	— 128

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in caste tribe and race since 1872

Caste, tribe or race.	Persons. 1901	1891	1881	1872	Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (—). 1891-1901	1881-1891	1872-1881	Net variation, increase (+) or decrease (—).
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Moghul	895	2 126		10	— 57·9			+ 885
Moran	125	5,812	..		— 97·8			
Morla	1,235	1 681		2,000	— 26 5			— 765
Muchi	13,930	10,337	12,678		+ 34·7	— 18 4		+ 1,252
Mudi	614							
Muhammadan not specified ..	20 745		1,317 022	1 102,371			+ 19·4	—1,081,626
Mukhi	2,508	2,361			+ 5·9			
Mundia	80,693	46 244	18 559		+ 74 4	+ 149·1		+ 62 134
Murmi	135	43		23	+ 221 4	..		+ 112
Muzahar	16 777	16 667	3,851		+ 6	+ 332·7		+ 12,926
Nabasakh	28		..					
Nadiyal (Dom Patni)	194,842	203 055	207 945	179,237	— 4·0	— 1·5	+ 16·0	+ 15,605
Naga ..	161 950	102 085	104 650	56,046	+ 58·6	— 2·4	+ 86·7	+ 105,904
Nagar ...	9			..	..	..	..	
Nagarchi	498	...	..					...
Naghansi	379	536			— 29·2		..	..
Nagesar	58	41	..	..	— 58 8			
Nagpuri ..	32			..			..	
Naik	162	..	...	23				+ 139
Naiya	176		..	..				
Namasudra (Chandal) ..	169,576	180,539	173,532	154,923	— 6·0	+ 4·0	+ 12·0	+ 14,653
Nandi ..	1	..			..			
Napit	32,310	32,989	31,249	29,142	— 2·0	+ 5 5	+ 7 2	+ 3,168
Nat	5,090	4,261	11,201	6 663	+ 19 4	— 61·9	+ 68·1	— 1,573
Native Christian	33,595	14,756	5,46	1 293	+ 127·6	+ 170·1	+ 322·4	+ 32,302
Nepali	2 500	1 07	3,991	1 635	+ 49·9	— 37·2	+ 144·0	+ 925
Newar	657	560			+ 17 3			..
New Zealander								
Nora	143	716	...		— 80·			
Nunia ..	16,856	6 993	2,329		+ 14 ·0	+ 2137	..	+ 14,627
Oao	23 86	7 736		218	+ 34 5			+ 23 649
Oriya	7 735	2,251		588	+ 243 6		...	+ 7,147
Owal	1,453	1 352		..	+ 7·4	..	..	
Pabari	2,394	913		1 145	+ 162·2	..		+ 1,249
Paik	1 3			...				..
Pallya	17		..	..		...	..	..
Pan	7,851	20 106			— 60·9		..	
Panjabi	51		...	..	+ 5,000·0			
Parai ...	3					..		
Pasi	6,989	3,573	..	61	+ 95·6		..	+ 6,928
Pathan	1 521	13,088	..	646	— 19·6	..		+ 9,875
Patia	2,462	3,508	5,217		— 29·8	— 32·7	..	— 2 755
Patial	365	209		129	+ 74·6		...	+ 236
Pator	1,319	820	..		+ 60 8		..	
Patwa ..	8 9	719	..	..	+ 13·9			..
Patwari ..	48	..	..		...		..	..
Phakial	219	565	..	...	— 61·2	..		..
Pod	17	29	..	238	— 41·3			— 221
Poi ..	15,039							
Portuguese ...	1	8			— 87·5			
Pradha ..	35				..			..
Rabha	67,285	69,774	56,499	60,903	— 3·5	+ 23 4	— 7·2	+ 6,382
Rai ..	1,200				..		...	
Rajbansi ..	120,071	123,751	106,376	58	— 2·9	+ 16 3	+182,966	+ 120,013
Rajbbar ...	2,115	1,086			+ 94 5			
Rajgiri ..	32	...	...	...			...	...
Rajput ...	4,310	2 783	1,681	1,067	+ 54·8	+ 65·5	+ 57·5	+ 3,243

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Variation in caste, tribe and race since 1872

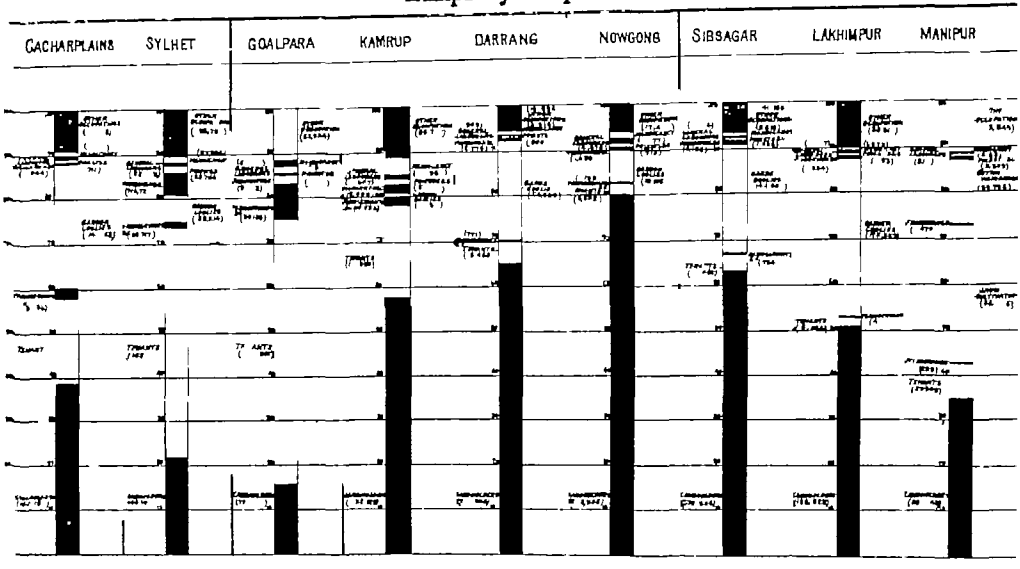
Caste

Caste, tribe or race	Persons. 1901	1891	1881	1872	Percentage of variation, increase (+) or decrease (−) 1891-1901	1881-91	1872-81	Net variation, increase (+) or decrease (−)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Raju	2	59			− 96 6			
Rajwar	6,702	5,360	916		+ 25 0	+ 485 1		+ 5,786
Rana	25							
Raut	170							
Rautia	1,379	790			+ 74 5			
Russian	2							
Sadgop	227	846		300	− 73 1			− 73
Saiyad	10,647	12,127		1,287	− 12 2			+ 9,360
Salot	8,590	9,356	12,093	3,180	− 8 1	− 22 6	+ 280 2	+ 5,410
Sankhari	50	10		21	+ 400			+ 29
Sannyasi	664	364			+ 82 4			
Santal	77,680	23,220	7,397	716	+ 234 5	+ 213 9	+ 933 1	+ 76,964
Saraogi	270	246			+ 9 7			
Sarki	106	101			+ 4 9			
Sarnakar	2,782	4,696	1,392	621	− 40 7	+ 237 3	+ 124 1	+ 2,161
Savar	832	684			+ 21 6			
Scotch	461			140				+ 321
Shaha	51,169	51,971	57,366		− 1 5	− 9 4		− 6,197
Shan	758	1,278	275		− 40 6	+ 364 7		+ 483
Sheikh	1,493,796	1,381,804		371	+ 8 1			+ 1,493,425
Sikh	848	97		102	+ 774 2			+ 746
Singpho	824	1,469	1,774	257	− 43 9	− 17 1	+ 590 2	+ 567
Sohnemia	107	274			− 60 9			
Spanish	1	1		1				
Subarnabanik	101	19		1,178	+ 431 5			− 1,077
Sudra	46,326	7,068		8,755	+ 555 4			+ 37,571
Sudra Das	21,220							
Sunri	3,431	105	1,412	49,138	+ 3,167 6	− 92 5	− 97 1	− 45 707
Sunuwar	1,602	54			+ 2,866 6			
Surahiya	382	823			− 53 5			
Sutradhar	17,434	16,731	14,486	26,943	+ 4 2	+ 15 4	− 46 2	− 9 509
Swiss	2			1				+ 1
Synteng	47,930	51 739	47,815	41,220	− 7 3	+ 8 2	+ 15 9	+ 6,710
Tambuli	195	137		1,783	+ 42 3			− 1,588
Tanti	21,715	11,002	6,532	4,010	+ 97 3	+ 68 4	+ 62 8	+ 17,705
Tarkhan	49							
Tatwa	123	22			+ 450 0			
Teli	38,810	35,624	20,249	23,246	+ 8 9	+ 75 9	− 12 8	+ 15,564
Telinga	2,058	393			+ 423 6			
Thakur	174	349			− 50 1			
Thami	22							
Thapa	1,625	1,515			+ 7 2			
Tharu	314	43			+ 630 2			
Tibetan	2							
Tipperah	9,771	8,659	3,984	3 108	+ 12 8	+ 117 3	+ 28 1	+ 6,663
Tiyar	359	237		1,058	+ 51 [illegible]			− 699
Tokar	829	1 069			− 22 4			
Totla	7,100	6,296	2,539		+ 12 7	+ 147 9		+ 4,561
Turaha	340	600			− 43 3			
Turi	12,418	8,240		127	+ 50 7			+ 12 [illegible]
Turk	20							
Turung	412	301			+ 26 8			
Udasi	45	30			+ 15 2			
Ukhar	5							
Vaisya	3,483	3,713	1,563	1,548	− 6 1	+ 131 6	+ 3 5	+ 1,935
Welsh	36			8				+ 28
West Indian	[illegible]			3				
Yakha	61	5			+ 1,220 0			

NOTES TO SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Baniya 1891 includes Benito.
Bediya, 1891 includes Bedia.
Chamar 18 2 includes Muchi and Kural.
Dosadh, 1891 includes Bahelia.
Jogi, 1881 includes Katani.
Kachari 1881 and 1872, incl des Sarania.
Kharia, 1891 incledes Khaira.
Kalbartta, 1872, includes Jallya.
Khasi 1891 and 1881 includes Dyko and Lyngam.
Koch 1891 includes Khyen.
1881 includes Madahi.
Kurl, 1872, includes Madak.
Lodha, 1891 incl des Lodhi.
Munda, 1881 includes Murari.
Sannyasi, 1891 includes Ramayat.
Sarnakar 1891 and 1881 includes Sonar
Sheikh 1891 includes Siddiki.
Sunri, 1881 includes Sarial.

Diagram showing the distribution of the population of the plains districts and Manipur by occupation.



CHAPTER XII.

OCCUPATION

Occupation

Scope of chapter

204 In this, the last chapter of the report, I shall try to give a general idea of the economic organization of the province, and to describe the way in which the mass of the people earn their living, leaving those who seek for information with regard to the more specialized and detailed occupations, to find it in the subsidiary statements appended to this chapter and in Tables XV and XVA in Part II of the report The changes, if any, that have taken place in the industrial distribution of the people during the last ten years have also to be passed in review, so that before discussing the data presented by our tables, it is necessary to describe briefly the system under which the figures have been collected and compiled at each of the last two censuses

Differences of procedure between 1891 and 1901

205 In 1891 the enumerators were directed to enter the occupation or means of livelihood of every person, and to add the word 'dependent' whenever the individual in question did not actually work at the occupation shown against his or her name The rules further laid down that for persons with two or more occupations the chief one only should be entered, except when they owned or cultivated land in addition to another occupation, when both should be recorded On the present occasion, the population was again divided into workers and dependents, but the conditional instruction with regard to occupations combined with agriculture was omitted, and the enumerators were directed to enter the subsidiary occupation in all cases, whether it was connected with the land or not The object of modifying the rules in this manner was to simplify the work for the enumerators, as it was thought that they were confused by the conditional order of the last census, and that a more complete return would be obtained if subsidiary occupations were entered in the schedule, but I am doubtful whether much has been gained by the alteration in procedure in Assam, where the return of occupations combined with agriculture was remarkably complete in 1891, and I am inclined to think that on this occasion the census staff not unfrequently omitted to record the subsidiary occupations followed by the people In 1891 the attention of the enumerator was expressly directed to the combination of agriculture and other functions, and in the standard set of questions he was directed to ask "Have you any other occupations besides agriculture?" but at the last census there seems to have been a tendency for barbers, washermen and persons of this class who had an interest in land to return themselves as landholders or tenants, and to ignore their less respectable avocations

A further difficulty arose with regard to the meaning to be attached to the word 'dependent,' and as soon as the instruction of the enumerators was taken in hand it became evident that, unless some definite rules were issued on the subject, there would be no uniformity in the classification of women and children Some persons would treat the wife of a cultivator who transplanted her husband's paddy as a worker, others as a dependent, and, with the object of securing as much uniformity as possible, I directed that—

(1) Women who assisted the men of the family by planting or cutting *dhan*, weaving cloths for sale, or selling fish or other products should be classified as workers

(2) Women who did not work out of doors, but restricted themselves to household work, such as husking paddy and weaving cloths for home wear, but not for sale, should be treated as dependents

(3) All children below twelve years of age, and boys still at school, living with their parents or guardians, should be classed as dependents, even though they did light work, such as buffalo and cow-herding

These instructions were carefully observed, and the census tables show that in nearly every district the distinction between a worker and a dependent was clearly understood

Distribution of population under eight main heads

206 The occupations recorded in the schedules were classified according to the scheme prescribed by the Census Commissioner, which contained eight main classes, *i e*, A—Government, B—Pasture and Agriculture, C—Personal Service, D—Preparation and Supply of Material Substances, E—Commerce, Transport and Storage, F—Professions, G—Unskilled Non-

Occupation. agricultural Labour and H—Means of Subsistence Independent of Occupation; and these classes were again divided into 24 orders 79 sub-orders and 520 groups, under one or other of which every entry made upon the schedules was compelled to fall.

It is obvious that in a province in which less than 2 per cent of the population live in towns, and in which the largest town contains less than 14,000 inhabitants,* the immense bulk of the people must be engaged in satisfying the primary and elemental needs of mankind and there is nothing remarkable in the fact revealed by the census tables that 84 2 per cent. of the population are supported by agriculture, 4·6 per cent. are engaged on the provision of food drink and stimulants 1 8 per cent. on earthwork and general labour 1·3 per cent are occupied with textile fabrics and articles of dress, and 1 2 per cent. with personal and domestic service. In other words, no less than 93 per cent of the population are engaged upon agriculture, the provision of food drink and clothing, earthwork and personal service while the remaining 19 orders include only 7 per cent. of the inhabitants of the province.

See Subsidiary Table I.

Agriculture.

207 The total population of Assam is 6 126,343 and out of this no less than 5 160 971 or 84 24 per cent., have been returned under the head of Agriculture, which is again divided into four sub-orders landholders and tenants, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and agricultural training The first of these sub-orders includes 679 per cent of the population 2,274,399 persons having returned themselves as cultivators who hold direct from the State, and 1 740 966 as cultivating tenants, the majority of whom are found in Cachar with its *mirasdari* system in Sylhet and Goalpara, where a great proportion of the land is permanently-settled and in Kamrup where there are large *nisf khiraj* and *lakhiraj* estates These figures moreover only include those persons who have returned agriculture as their principal occupation; and if to them are added those who are partially agriculturists and the estimated number of their dependents, their numbers rise to 5 242,723 or 85 57 per cent., as compared with 86 34 per cent. in 1891

Distribution by districts.

208 The distribution of the agricultural population by districts is shown in Subsidiary Table II, and if we leave out of consideration the North Cachar Hills where nearly one-half of the people censused were temporary visitors engaged on the construction of the Assam-Bengal Railway the percentage of agriculturists varies between 95·6 in the Garo Hills and 72 8 in Manipur The low proportion in that State is chiefly due to the fact that no less than 34,304 women have been shown as actual workers under the head of weavers and spinners; but as there is, as far as I am aware, little export of cloths from Manipur and, as the total population of the State is only 284,465 it hardly seems probable that over 34,000 Manipuri females can be earning their living by weaving cloths for sale, and the majority of these persons were probably the womenfolk of agriculturists, who make cloths for home wear and who in other districts have been included in the cultivating class. In Sylhet where the various village functionaries such as the potter and the barber are found, and where the fishing industry is of considerable importance, only 81 per cent. of the population are agriculturists and the same proportion is found in Kamrup where there are a large number of fishermen and priests. Darrang Nowgong and Sibsagar return 90 per cent. or more of their population under this head a fact for which the tea industry is to some extent responsible and it is only the presence of the colliery and railway coolies in Lakhimpur which brings the percentage there down to 87 The proportion of cultivators in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills is low but the district is so sparsely peopled that the inhabitants of Shillong produce a very appreciable effect upon the total and the Khasi is a fairly enterprising trader who spends a great part of his time in travelling from one market to another and is not content to subsist entirely on the produce of the soil. Elsewhere in the hills the non-agriculturists do not form as much as 7 per cent. of the total population

209 The statistics for tenancy are of considerable interest as they throw some light upon the growth of the tendency to sublet in the raiyatwari districts of the province. I do not attach much weight to the figures for the Surma Valley and the enormous increase in the number of tenants in Goalpara is simply due to the fact that in 1891 more than two-thirds of the persons in sub-order 10 returned themselves as cultivators unspecified. The increase in the three districts of Darrang Sibsagar and Lakhimpur is very significant, and is apparently due to a practice which is growing up amongst the Assamese of leasing out the land lying near

Tenants.

Growth (%) of cultivating tenants.

	1901.	1891.
Cachar Plains	80,000	66,300
Sylhet	1,000,140	700,463
Goalpara	88,000	40,000
Kamrup	114,000	71,000
Darrang	78,000	8,514
Nowgong	4,000	6,671
Sibsagar	87,140	3,8
Lakhimpur	8,000	1,000

* I have excluded the native State of Manipur as Imphal is not town in the ordinary sense of the word, but an overgrown village.

a tea garden to the coolies, and moving further afield themselves for their own cultivation The profits are considerable, as the rent is sometimes as much as three times the Government revenue, but as the coolie must have land near the factory, while the cultivator is not so fettered in his choice, the transaction is for the benefit of both parties

Occu

The *jhum* cultivators, of whom there are 275,599, represent the cultivators of the Lushai, North Cachar and Naga Hills, and of the hill tracts of Manipur The return under this head is not complete, as the enumerators did not, as a rule, draw any distinction between *jhum* and ordinary cultivation, and in all probability a considerable number of persons in the Khasi and Jaintia and Garo Hills have been improperly included under the latter head It is, however, doubtful whether the distinction is one of any great importance in Assam, as even in the plains there is a considerable amount of fluctuating cultivation, and land taken up for mustard or *ahu* rice is generally resigned after the second or third year

The tea industry has been divided into two heads,—the superior staff, under which 6,480 people have been returned, and labourers and other subordinates, who number altogether 623,417 The total population censused on tea gardens was 657,331, but this includes a considerable number of persons, such as shop-keepers, servants, saices, carpenters, cartmen, and even cultivators, who were returned under the special groups appropriate to them, though it excludes, on the other hand, the coolies who live outside the garden boundaries

210 The figures in the margin compare the proportion of persons who have returned agriculture as their principal means of subsistence in Assam in 1901 with the proportion of persons who returned agriculture as their sole means of subsistence in Assam and other provinces in 1891 It will be seen that the two things are not quite identical, but they clearly show that, even in an agricultural country like India, Assam stands out as being conspicuously dependent upon the land for the means of livelihood of its inhabitants

Percentage of agriculturists

Assam 1901	...	81·2
Assam 1891	...	70·9
Bengal 1891		52·2
Bombay, 1891	...	58·7
Burma 1891	...	63·4
North Western Provinces 1891		61·8
Punjab 1891		57·7
Madras 1891	...	54·8
India 1901	...	63·3

211 Order VII—'Food, drink and stimulants,' under which 282,187 persons have been returned, is chiefly composed of fishermen and fish dealers (154,707) Separate figures are given in Table XV for these two classes of persons, but in this province the distinction does not, as a rule, represent any real difference, and the two functions are generally combined in the same individual as far as men are concerned, though women more frequently sell than catch fish for sale The last two words are a necessary qualification, as the ordinary Assamese peasant woman is frequently to be seen in the rains catching the small fry that are found in the pools, ditches and flooded fields, though the result of her labours is intended solely for home consumption, and could not be sold without serious damage to the social position of the vendor The remaining groups in the order which afford a means of livelihood to a considerable number of people are 'Grocers and general condiment dealers' (21,599),—the head under which I have classed the ordinary village shopkeeper, the mudi-dokandar of the Surma Valley, who generally describes himself as a seller of salt and oil, but who also deals in grain and the various other requirements of village life, 'Grain and pulse dealers' (20,529), a group who, in Assam at any rate, can hardly be distinguished from the grocers, 'Sellers of betel leaf and cardamoms' (19,571), the majority of whom are found in Sylhet, 'Rice pounders and huskers' (17,589), amongst whom nearly all the workers are women, and 'Cow and buffalo keepers' (16,776)

Food and drink

212 Order XXII—'Earthwork and general labour' includes 31,583 road and railway labourers, the majority of whom were employed on the construction of the Assam-Bengal Railway, and 78,146 general labourers These persons are found in considerable numbers in every district, but are especially numerous in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, where, as I have already said, a large number of persons earn their living by carrying merchandise of various kinds from one market to another

Earthwork

213 Order XII—'Textile fabrics and articles of dress,' is remarkable for the fact that the female workers very largely outnumber the male, there being 50,066 of the former and only 9,025 of the latter The great bulk of the order consist of cotton weavers (31,301) and cotton spinners (22,112), the majority of whom as I have already said, were seen in Manipur, and I am inclined to think wrongly included under this head The two groups represent those who were returned as 'weaving cotton' and 'spinning thereon' but this distinction in nomenclature does not, as far as I am aware, represent a distinction of fact, the majority of women in Assam spinning the thread as well as weaving the cloths required for home use

Textile fabrics

Occupation.

Nine thousand one hundred and fourteen persons were returned as supported by dealing in piece goods and 8,716 by tailoring The vendor of piece-goods generally sells many other things as well and the precise article selected for special mention by the enumerator was more or less a matter of chance

2 553 persons were entered in the schedules as connected with the silk industry and in all probability the number of those who entirely depend upon this product for their livelihood does not exceed this figure Silk, however is the ordinary holiday dress of the respectable Assamese peasant woman, and a large number of cultivators, especially in Sibsagar Kamrup and Nowgong, rear enough worms to furnish silk for home consumption, though not as a rule, for sale

Domestic service.

214 The last of the five orders which I have selected for special mention as comprising a considerable number of persons who are engaged in satisfying the more primitive and elementary requirements of the body is Personal and household service. The total number of persons supported by this class of occupations is 75,395, of whom 28 720 are dependent upon domestic service, 12 830 on the barber's craft, 8 795 on the washerman s and 4,741 on the cook s The number of people in this province who can afford to keep a domestic servant is comparatively small and in Assam Proper we do not even find the village servants, such as the barber and the washerman, the few persons who practise these professions in the Brahmaputra Valley being foreigners.

The remaining 7 per cent.

215 In the preceding paragraphs, I have given a brief description of the means of livelihood of 93 per cent. of the population and it only now remains to refer to the more salient features noticeable amongst the remaining 7 per cent.

The learned and artistic professions.

216. The learned and artistic professions take the first place numerically as well as in social rank as they support no less than 84,065 persons, or 1 37 per cent. of the total population, the great majority of whom are priests or their dependents (43,631) The Education Department and the private schools of the province account for 8 148 of the remainder and the heading Writers and Private Clerks (6 096) is well represented. These persons though placed in the general scheme under the sub-order Literature, are probably all moharrirs on tea gardens or in shops.

Three thousand five hundred and eighty five persons are actively connected with the medical profession; of whom 643 are licensed practitioners, 2,163 practitioners without diploma and only 192 professional midwives, a somewhat significant fact in a province containing over six million people. Music and dancing supports 5,047 people, and the law 3,349, though, according to the census returns, there are only 411 practising pleaders and mukhtars in the province.

The topographical and revenue surveyors are for the most part mandals and patwans, the great majority of whom depend as much upon agriculture as upon their modest pay for their means of livelihood though they have not unfrequently omitted to mention the fact in the census schedules.

The non-workers.

217 The next order according to the standard of numerical importance, is Means of subsistence independent of occupation a head under which 81 702 persons, or 1 33 per cent. of the population, have been returned. The immense majority of these people are beggars (77,288) who are as a rule old persons of either sex who are supported by the charity of their fellow villagers. The order also includes pensioners and persons confined in jail. Only 307 capitalists, or persons supported by house-rent, shares and property other than land, were enumerated in the province, a fact which clearly illustrates the primitive character of its economic organization

Commerce, transport, metals, and wood.

218 Four more orders call for special mention— Commerce, Transport and storage, Metals and precious stones, and Wood cane and leaves

Commerce supports only 47,906 people or ·78 of the population though in India as a whole in 1891 1·63 per cent of the population derived their means of livelihood from this source 28,470 persons entered 'shopkeeper without specifying the class of goods sold, and 1,906 have been shown in the group reserved for general merchants, this being the most suitable head under which to place the Kayah with his manifold forms of trade. In Assam there is very little tendency towards specialisation amongst the commercial community and the ordinary shopkeeper presides over a village store for which several of the headings in the scheme of occupations would be equally applicable. The Kayah affords an admirable instance of this *Posh Bak* like combination of functions As a dealer in grain he might be returned under group 97 and as a grocer under group 124. He is generally an opium seller group

126, a salt and tobacco seller, groups 128 and 130, a dealer in petroleum, group 142, O and a seller of cotton thread, group 276 He is an umbrella seller, group 300, and a piece-goods dealer, group 304 I have known him act as a vendor of the precious metals, group 318, and he does a certain amount of money lending, group 392 But to my mind the least misleading groups of all for this many sided person are general merchant, group 396, and his assistants, group 397 It is doubtful whether the distinction even between these two groups is of any very great importance in Assam, as, though the Kayah generally poses as a principal, he is, as a rule, only the manager of the shop in which he serves

The professional money lender is not largely represented in the province, and only 1,031 people have been returned as actual workers under this head 279 of these persons are women, and 164 combine the occupation with agriculture Other people, no doubt, such as the Kayas, put out money at interest, and give advances for crops, but the money lender pure and simple is by no means common in Assam

'Transport and storage' supports 38,591 persons, or 63 per cent of the total population, the majority of whom are cart owners and drivers and boatmen 6,044 persons are employed on railways, though this of course excludes the coolies engaged on construction work The pack bullock supports no less than 2,067 persons, as this form of transport is still used in the Cachar district, where the character of the soil renders it almost impossible to keep unmetalled roads open to cart traffic in the rains, and the elephant has a considerable number of persons dependent on him, the majority of whom are found in the Assam Valley

Order XIII—'Metals and precious stones' contains 33,460 persons, or 55 per cent of the population The 14,560 persons who have been returned under the heading of workers in precious metals are distributed fairly equally over every district of the province, but are proportionately most numerous in Kamrup, where the goldsmiths of Barpeta make filigree work, which possesses considerable artistic merit Elsewhere in the Assam Valley the commonest articles of jewellery are small barrel-shaped pieces of wood adorned with gold and garnets, or with a handsome green enamel, which are inserted in the lobes of the ears, and lockets of much the same shape and pattern The Khasis also manufacture rather handsome jewellery of a somewhat barbaric type, though one vendor at any rate whom I met had allowed his respect for the Sirkar to overcome his artistic judgment, and had used as the centre piece and special attraction of a rather pretty silver locket, a valuable unused stamp 5,641 persons were returned under the head of 'Makers and sellers of brass and bell metal,' and 12,672 under the head of 'Makers and sellers of iron and hardware,' but as many of these craftsmen work indifferently with either metal the distinction is not of any very great value

Order XV—'Wood, cane and leaves' includes 32,488 people, or 53 per cent of the population, the majority of whom are carpenters and makers and sellers of baskets and mats According to the census tables, the saw-mill industry only supports 520 persons, but some of the employees have evidently returned themselves under other heads, such as wood-cutters and sawyers or coolies, for, according to the Report on the Working of the Indian Factories Act for 1900, the average daily number of operatives employed in the mills was 1,015.

Special groups.

219. In the preceding paragraphs, I have briefly passed in review the occupations which form the means of support of 98 36 of the population, and I now propose to refer to a few single groups, which seem to call for comment 8,838 persons have been returned under the occupation 'herdsman', but the majority of these persons were probably the children of cultivators who look after the family cattle, as in 1891, when the number of herdsmen returned was much about the same as on the present occasion, it was found that more than half were under 15 years of age

Group 99—'Makers of *gur* by hand,' under which 999 persons have been entered, affords no index of the extent to which sugar is cultivated in the province It is, however, as a rule, only a bye-product, and the cultivator has in consequence been shown under the general head

One person only has been returned as engaged on the manufacture of ice, a somewhat significant fact, if we bear in mind the large European population of Assam

The collieries, for which details are found in groups 146 and 147, are situated at Margherita, and, though a certain amount of coal of the most excellent quality is extracted from the Khasi Hills, the labourers employed have been shown under a different head

The stone and marble works of groups 153 and 154 are the lime-quarries on the southern face of the Khasi Hills.

Occupation.

Four persons are supported by wood and three by ivory carving The last named profession is followed by one solitary old man at Jorhat and when he dies his art will apparently die with him

Photography supports 27 persons and painting 38

Under the sub-order Disreputable we find that there are 911 practising prostitutes one individual who has had the courage to return herself as a pimp and one who is a cattle thief Two persons are shown as receivers of stolen property —a return which is I fear considerably below the mark,—but it is obvious that persons openly professing this occupation would be liable to speedy transfer to groups 518 and 520 in which are shown under trial and *convicted prisoners.*

The industrial population.

220 Subsidiary Table III shows the distribution of the industrial population by districts Under this term I have included all those persons shown in Class D as supported by the preparation and supply of material substances. The class is a very wide one, and though it includes persons like printers stationers opticians and others who represent a comparatively advanced stage in the economic development of a country it also includes people like the weavers and spinners who are only the wives of the ordinary cultivator fishermen buffalo-keepers, wood-cutters sawyers, and a large number of persons of this sort who would find a place in the most primitive community Of the total population of the province, 7·8 per cent. fall in this class, the ratio varying from 22 1 in Manipur where, as I have already remarked, the cultivator s womenfolk have been shown as weavers and spinners, to 0 7 in the Lushai Hills In Table IV I have excluded Sub-order 17— Provision of animal food from the *industrial class, and the result is that the percentage of the population returned under this* head falls to 5 both for the province as a whole and for the Surma Valley as compared with 7·8 and 9·6 when the whole class is taken into account. In the Brahmaputra Valley the proportion of industrials if we exclude fisherfolk and people of that kidney, is very low, sinking in Darrang to 1·6 per cent. of the whole. It would in fact be difficult to find a civilized people who were in a more simple and primitive stage of economic development than the Assamese, and the great majority even of these so-called industrials are engaged in satisfying the elementary needs of their neighbours with fish firewood and simple articles of clothing

The commercial population.

221. Subsidiary Table V shows the distribution of the commercial population by natural divisions and districts. I have already explained that this order practically consists of the shopkeeper (unspecified) and his servants, and, this being so little is to be gained by an examination of the figures, as the variation in the distribution by districts does not represent a genuine difference in their economic conditions, but is merely due to the village shopkeeper having been described as a *shopkeeper in one case, when he ranks as a commercial man, and as a* grainseller or a salt and oil seller in another when he is placed with the industrials in Class D I have, in fact, only included this table in the chapter in order to preserve uniformity with other provinces, but the fact that probably at least five-sixths of the order would, if all the facts were fully known, be transferred to Class D with the industrials, obviously deprives it of any value.

The learned and artistic professions.

222. We are treading on firmer ground however when we come to the Learned and artistic professions. I have already described the classes of persons of whom this order is composed, and in Table VI we find them distributed by districts. More than *half of these professional persons* are, as I have said priests and their families, and it is this fact which accounts for the high percentage found in Sylhet, Kamrup and Mamipur where the priestly caste is very numerous. In the hill districts the proportion of professional men is low except in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills where there are a considerable number of clerks and teachers in the employ of the missionaries.

Comparison with 1891.

223. Subsidiary Table VII compares the number of persons returned under each order at the two last enumerations, but the variations it discloses *require careful examination, and often indicate little or* no change in the actual facts as it is the exception rather than the rule, for those whose principal occupation is non-agricultural to be contented with a single means of livelihood and there is a certain amount of uncertainty as to which particular side of their professional life will be selected by the enumerator for record in the schedule. An admirable instance of these changes, which are no changes, will be found in the first order,—Administration —which has decreased by no less than 37 8 per cent The whole of this decrease has, however occurred under the one head rural police, and is due to the fact that *in 1891 the village chaukidar was treated as a* chaukidar whereas at the last census the majority of them were returned as cultivators agriculture being their main means of livelihood.

Occupation

The decrease in Order IV—'Provision and care of animals' is chiefly due to the two heads 'Cattle-breeders and dealers,' who are likely to be confused with, Groups 78—'Cow and buffalo keepers,' and 32—'Pig-breeders' The number of persons in this province whose sole occupation is breeding pigs must be very small, and on the present occasion the pig-breeders have probably been returned as cultivators

Order V—'Agriculture' has increased by 22 5 per cent, partly from the natural growth of the population and the importation of large numbers of coolies, and partly owing to the fact that a large number of persons who combine agriculture with some special occupation have returned themselves under the more general head on the present occasion

The decrease under Order VI—'Personal, household and sanitary services,' falls chiefly under the two heads 'Barbers' and 'Washermen' These two village functionaries are not indigenous to Assam Proper or the hill districts, and those censused there are foreigners In 1891 two-thirds of these persons combined the traditional occupation of their caste with agriculture, and the decrease is apparently due to an omission to record the special but less honourable function on the present occasion

Under Order VII there is a large decrease under the head 'Fishermen and fish dealers,' but as the occupation is largely combined with agriculture (in 1891 more than half the fishermen were cultivators), the variation in the figures in all probability does not represent any variation in fact

The decrease in Order X—'Vehicles and vessels' is due to the boat builders, four fifths of whom in 1891 combined the occupation with agriculture The figures for this group illustrate the difficulty of comparing the persons returned under the different occupations at each of the last two enumerations Boat building alone shows 1,823 persons as dependent on it for their livelihood, but from Table XVA it appears that 1,094 cultivators practised it as a subsidiary occupation, and if we assume that these persons had as many dependents as the boat builders, pure and simple, the total for the group rises from 1,823 to over 5,000 The same explanation holds good of Order XIII—'Metals and precious stones' and Order XV—'Wood, cane and leaves'

In 1891, the cultivator who did goldsmith's or blacksmith's work was shown with those dependent upon him under these two heads On the present occasion, persons whose principal occupation was cultivation, and who followed these other occupations in their leisure moments, have been classed as cultivators in Table XV In Table XVA, we find, however, the number of these composite workers, and if we assume that they had as many persons dependent on them as those who were goldsmiths and blacksmiths and nothing more, the number of persons under these two groups equals and exceeds the figures for 1891

The large decrease under the head 'Learned and artistic professions' at first sight looks as though little material and moral progress can have been made during the last ten years, but the three heads 'Priests,' 'Religious mendicants,' and 'Non-military band players' are almost entirely responsible for this result If we add to the priests those persons who have looked upon their religious functions as being merely subsidiary to the practical business of cultivation, with those who are dependent upon them, the priesthood is very nearly as fully represented now as it was ten years ago

Education supports more persons now than it did in 1891, and so does medicine, if we add to the regular practitioners those who are called, like Cincinnatus, from the plough, to save, not the State, but the lives of their fellow villagers, and engineering and survey, have more persons dependent upon them than in 1891 There has been a slight decrease in the number of those supported by the law, but this fact, assuming it to be a fact, would hardly, I think, be regretted even by the members of the Bar

Dependents

224 Two points remain for our consideration, in which comparison cannot be made with the figures for 1891 The enumerators in that year entered against each person who was not an actual worker the word 'dependent,' but in compilation the distinction was not maintained, and the Census tables accordingly only show the total number of persons supported by each occupation Certain conclusions can be drawn from the age statistics as to the proportion of these people who are actual workers, but the figures throw no light upon the extent to which women were actually engaged on work There was no distinction between the lady doctor and the wife or daughter of the medical man, between the priestess and the wife of the priest, between the proprietress of an estate and the wife and daughters of a zemindar

On the present occasion, Table XV shows the number of persons who are supported by each occupation without working at it, and the number of actual workers From Subsidiary Table I, we find that, taking the population as a whole, the number of workers and dependents is almost exactly equal, there being 499 of the

Occupation.

former and 501 of the latter in every 1,000 people. Turning to the staple occupation of the country we see that out of every 100 persons supported by agriculture, 49 are actual workers and 51 dependents. This however includes the agricultural labourers who are generally too poor to support anyone besides themselves, and the growers of special products, who to all intents and purposes are garden coolies, amongst whom 73 persons out of every 100 are workers and in Sub-order 10— Landholders and tenants which includes nearly 68 per cent. of the population of the province, there are only 44 workers to every 56 dependents. The proportion of dependents under any order depends (*a*) upon the extent to which women and children can work at the occupations of which it is composed; (*b*) upon the number of foreigners by whom these occupations are followed and (*c*) upon the wealth of the average worker

Under Order II— Defence, and Order IV— Provision and care of animals, the number of dependents is small because the majority of workers under these two heads are foreigners who leave their families at home; while in Sub-order 66— Law the proportion of dependents is large, because the average pleader is a well to-do man with a considerable number of relations and servants.

The small proportion of dependents in Order XII— Textile fabrics and dress is due to the fact that a large number of the workers are the wives and daughters of cultivators who have been shown as earning their living by weaving cotton cloth while their children and little brothers and sisters have been shown as dependent upon cultivation for their subsistence. In the remaining orders the causes which have produced the varying proportions of workers and dependents are sufficiently obvious, and do not call for special mention

Women workers.

225. Subsidiary Table IX shows that no less than 1 073,776 women in the Province have been returned as actual workers. Of these 893,270 fall under Order V— Agriculture, 52 155 under Order VII— Provision of food drink and stimulants and 50 066 under Order XII— Textile fabrics and dress where as is only natural, the women workers largely outnumber the men. The only other important heads are earthwork and means of subsistence independent of occupation,—in other words mendicancy—which account for 48 861 females between them.

In the Surma Valley and Goalpara, the womenfolk of the cultivator do not generally labour in the fields and there are fully ten male workers for every female; but in Assam Proper and the hill districts the peasant woman usually assists her husband by planting the paddy seedlings and weeding and cutting the *dhai* and in the immense majority of cases she has been shown and rightly so as a worker The field labourers or temporary hands who are engaged at harvest time are mostly women there being nearly 15 female workers to every male, and although the garden coolies the proportion is nearly equal Other occupations much affected by women are washing, fish selling grain dealing, rice pounding, the sale of vegetables and grocery pot making and selling and basket weaving

Turning to occupations which are more usually confined to men, we find that 38 females are returned from the Lushai Hills as village headmen this being the most appropriate heading for the Lushai Rani. One female is said to be working in a printing press, and four as carpenters. There are 18 female contractors, the majority of whom were censused in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Manipur where women are much given to trading on their own account, 1 113 priestesses, and one lady in Manipur who asserted that she made her living by writing books. There are 4 licensed and 128 unlicensed lady doctors and 192 midwives. The actual number of female workers and the percentage that they bear to the working men in certain selected orders and groups will be found in the tenth statement appended to this chapter and no useful purpose will be served by reproducing these figures in the letter press of the report.

Distribution of professions by districts.

226 Subsidiary Table XI shows the number of persons in each district to every actual worker following the professions of the barber the washerman, the potter the priest, the schoolmaster and the doctor I have already referred to the absence of the village functionaries from Assam Proper, and this fact is clearly brought out by this table. In Sylhet every barber has 769 clients in Darrang and Nowgong he has over 3,600 In Sylhet, the average dhobi's charge is 739 souls, or rather bodies, in Goalpara it is 4,278 and in Nowgong 3,730 though in the tea districts the presence of a considerable European population has led to an influx of washermen, with the result that in Lakhimpur there is one dhobi to every 1,064 people. Potters are most numerous in the Brahmaputra Valley where there is one to every 396 people, whereas in the Surma Valley each maker and seller of pots has 1 014 clients. Sylhet and Kamrup are the most religious districts with 227 and 282 persons to every priest while in Lakhimpur

there are 1,811 The average doctor in the province, whether licensed or unlicensed, has 2,183 patients, but as the great majority of these medical men are unlicensed practitioners, it is doubtful whether the villagers obtain much benefit from their ministrations

Occupation

227 The table showing statistics for caste by traditional and actual occupation has not been prepared for this province, but I have sorted separately for Table XV 30,070 persons belonging to recognized coolie castes,* who were censused outside tea gardens in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur I have not printed this table, but the details will remain on record in manuscript, and the main occupations returned have been summarised in the statement in the margin, which shows the number of persons supported by each form of work The great majority of these persons are engaged with cultivation in some form or another, or general labour which was probably mainly agricultural, though the fact was not specifically stated 431 were supported by domestic service, and a small number were cart owners and drivers, and even shopkeepers or their dependents

Occupation by caste

Cultivating landholders	[illegible]
Cultivating tenants	[illegible]
Farm servants	[illegible]
Garden coolies	4,747
Indoor servants	431
Cow and buffalo keepers	[illegible]
Shopkeepers	[illegible]
Cart owners and drivers	101
Road and railway labourers	[illegible]
General labour	[illegible]
Beggars	[illegible]
Others	[illegible]
Total	30,070

228 It may perhaps be thought that this review of the occupations of the province is unduly brief, but the subject is not one which lends itself readily to description

Conclusion

In England there is a marked tendency towards specialization of function and the subdivision of labour, and the dividing line between one means of livelihood and another is very clearly marked, but this is not the case in Assam In the first place, the immense majority of the people are agriculturists of one kind or another, and there is thus but little to say about them, and we are confronted with the further difficulty that here, if anywhere in the world, 'one man in his time plays many parts' The cultivators rear their own silkworms, make their own clothes, catch their own fish tend their own cattle, and, in the case of the fisher castes, make and navigate their own boats Even if they follow such recognised professions as those of the barber and washerman, they usually combine these functions with the life of the ordinary *raiyat*, while if they are engaged in commerce, they do not confine themselves to the sale of a single class of goods but try to include within the four walls of their shop all that is required to satisfy the simple wants of the village folk It is thus almost impossible to divide the inhabitants of Assam into 520 groups, and to specify the exact number which should fall under each head, and the distinctions, which in a more highly specialized community are no doubt suitable enough, become in this province distinctions in name, but not in fact As an instance of what I mean, I may refer to the case of the field labourers, of whom (with their dependents) there were 11,145 in 1891 and 51,961 at the last census The expression used was 'reaps paddy' but the great majority of these persons were censused in Goalpara, and were in all probability only the wives of the ordinary tenant farmers who helped them in planting and cutting their crops

In other parts of India the stern experience of repeated famines must have suggested to Government the desirability of fostering other occupations less precarious than the cultivation of the soil, but in Assam there is an abundance of culturable land, and failure of crops is almost unknown, so that there is as yet no reason for trying to induce the *raiyat* to abandon his traditional manner of life, or to artificially stimulate other and more complex industries The occupations of Assam in fact begin and end with agriculture The only manufacture of importance in the province is tea, and the other factories are represented by fourteen saw-mills and the brick and pipe works at Ledo The mineral industry of the province consists of lime quarries and coal measures in the Khasi Hills, the coal mines of Margherita and the oil wells of Digboi, and this being so, it is difficult to say much of the occupations of the country without reproducing figures, which are already available, for any one who wishes to refer to them, in Part II of the Report

* The castes referred were Bagdi, Bhuiya, Bauri, Dosadh, Ghasi, Ghatwal, Gond, Kharia, Kora, [illegible], Munda, Musahar, Nenar, Nunia, Oraon, Pan, Sarial and [illegible]

Occupation.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I.

General distribution by occupation.

Orders and sub-orders.	Percentage on total population.		Percentage in each order and sub-order	
	Persons supported.	Actual workers.	Actual workers.	Dependents.
1		3	4	5
Order I.—Administration	·37	14	38·96	61·04
Sub-order 1.—Civil Service of the State	·25	10	41·68	58·32
" 2.—Service of Local and Municipal bodies ...	·01	·01	46·21	53·79
3.—Village service	11	·03	31·67	68·33
Order II.—Defence	16	11	68 14	31 86
Sub-order 4.—Army	16	11	68 14	31·86
Order III.—Service of Native and Foreign States ..	·04	·02	38·64	61·36
Sub-order 6.—Civil Officers	·04	·02	38·64	61·36
Order IV.—Provision and care of animals	18	15	79·92	20·08
Sub-order 8.—Stock breeding and dealing	18	15	80·60	19·40
" 9.—Training and care of animals			52·06	47 94
Order V.—Agriculture	84 24	41 11	48 80	51·20
Sub-order 10.—Landholders and tenants	67·87	29·64	43 68	56·32
" 11.—Agricultural labourers ..	6 00	3·91	65·08	34 92
" 12.—Growers of special products ...	10·30	7·33	73·08	26·92
13.—Agricultural training and supervision and forests ..	07	03	40·51	59·49
Order VI.—Personal household and sanitary service	1·23	·75	60·58	39·42
Sub-order 14.—Personal and domestic service	1 18	·72	60·87	39·13
" 15.—Non-domestic entertainment			58 44	4 56
16.—Sanitation	·05	·03	53 46	46 54
Order VII.—Food drink and stimulants	4 61	2·26	48·97	51·03
Sub-order 17.—Provision of animal food	2·82	1 29	45·67	54·33
" 18.—Provision of vegetable food	·99	56	56·95	43·05
" 19.—Provision of drink, condiments and stimulants	80	41	50·70	49·30
Order VIII.—Light, firing and forage	12	·07	61·34	38 66
Sub-order 20.—Lighting	·01	·01	81 11	18·89
21.—Fuel and forage	11	·06	59·79	40·21
Order IX.—Buildings ..	18	10	55·71	44 29
Sub-order 22.—Building materials	·08	·04	54·78	45·22
23.—Artificers in building ..	10	·06	56 40	43·60
Order X.—Vehicles and vessels	04	·02	4 53	58 45
Sub-order 24.—Railway and Tramway plant	·01	·01	93·85	6·15
" 25.—Carts, carriages, etc.			71 11	28·89
26.—Ships and boats ...	·03	·01	32·36	67·64
Order XI.—Supplementary requirements	·06	·03	49·82	50·18
Sub-order 27.—Paper ...	..		100·00	..
28.—Books and prints	01	·01	47·55	52·45
" 29.—Watches and clocks and scientific instruments.		..	36·78	63·22
" 30.—Carving and engraving	..		77·78	22·22
31.—Toys and curiosities	·01	..	58·97	41·03
" 32.—Musical and medical instruments ...	..	..	55·64	44·36
" 33.—Bangles necklaces, beads, sacred threads, etc.	·03	·02	50·56	49·44
" 34.—Furniture ...	..	..	62·50	37·50
" 35.—Harness	..	..	73·68	26·32
" 36.—Tools and machinery ...	·01	..	48 11	5 89
37.—Arms and ammunition	..		36·86	63·14
Order XII.—Textile fabrics and dress ..	1·30	·96	74 43	25·57
Sub-order 38.—Wool and fur	..	..	71 52	28 48
32.—Silk ...	·04	·01	33 37	66 63
" 40.—Cotton	·94	77	82·14	17·86
" 41.—Jute hemp flax, coir etc. ...	·02	·01	71 13	28·87
" 42.—Dress	·30	17	55·96	44·04

SUBSIDIARY TABLE I—*contd*

Occupatio

General distribution by occupation

Orders and sub-orders	Percentage on total population		Percentage in each order and sub-order	
	Persons supported	Actual workers	Actual workers	Dependents
1	2	3	4	5
Order XIII—Metals and precious stones	55	22	40 91	50 09
Sub-order 43—Gold, silver and precious stones	25	09	37 90	62 10
" 44—Brass, copper and bell-metal	09	04	42 56	57 44
" 45—Tin, zinc, quicksilver and lead			52 36	47 64
" 46—Iron and steel	21	09	43 54	56 46
Order XIV—Glass, earthen and stoneware	29	16	54 48	45 52
Sub-order 47—Glass and chinaware			46 15	53 85
" 48—Earthen and stoneware	29	16	54 50	45 50
Order XV—Wood, cane and leaves, etc	53	29	54 95	45 05
Sub-order 49—Wood and bamboos	35	17	48 98	51 02
" 59—Canework, matting and leaves, etc	18	12	66 97	33 03
Order XVI—Drugs, gums, dyes, etc	02	01	56 65	43 35
Sub-order 51—Gums, wax, resins and similar forest produce	01		42 83	57 17
" 52—Drugs, dyes, pigments, etc	01	01	64 79	35 21
Order XVII—Leather, etc	13	06	48 43	51 57
Sub order 53—Leather, horns and bones	13	06	48 43	51 57
Order XVIII—Commerce	78	43	54 26	45 74
Sub-order 54—Money and securities	05	02	36 12	63 88
" 55—General merchandise	05	03	48 01	51 99
" 56—Dealing unspecified	61	35	56 62	43 38
" 57—Middlemen, brokers and agents	07	03	51 23	48 77
Order XIX—Transport and storage	63	41	65 53	34 47
Sub-order 58—Railway	10	07	72 09	27 91
" 59—Road	21	12	59 73	40 27
" 60—Water	22	16	71 19	28 81
" 61—Messages	05	03	57 09	42 91
" 62—Storage and weighing	05	03	59 99	40 01
Order XX—Learned and artistic professions	1 37	51	37 66	62 34
Sub-order 63—Religion	79	29	36 60	63 40
" 64—Education	13	06	45 42	54 58
" 65—Literature	10	03	30 07	69 93
" 66—Law	06	01	25 95	74 05
" 67—Medicine	15	06	39 98	60 02
" 68—Engineering and survey	06	03	4[illegible] 61	5[illegible] 39
" 69—Natural science			50 00	50 00
" 70—Pictorial art and sculpture			50 77	49 23
" 71—Music, acting and dancing, etc	08	03	43 55	56 45
Order XXI—Sport	02	01	45 25	54 75
Sub-order 72—Sport	01		37 99	[illegible]
" 73—Games and exhibitions	01	01	[illegible]	51 52
Order XXII—Earthwork and general labour	1 70	1 20	66 84	33 16
Sub-order 74—Earthwork, etc	52	44	84 97	15 03
" 75—General labour	1 27	·76	59 49	40 51
Order XXIII—Indefinite and disreputable occupations	03	02	85 62	14 38
Sub-order 76—Indefinite	01	01	10[illegible] 00	
" 77—Disreputable	02	01	8[illegible] 16	1[illegible] 84
Order XXIV—Independent	1 73	83	61 69	[illegible] 61
Sub-order 78—Property and alms	1 27	79	61 65	[illegible] 14
" 79—At the State expense	06	04	62 47	37 53
Grand total	...		40 87	5 13

Occupation.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE II

Distribution of the agricultural population by natural divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts	Population supported by agriculture.	Percentage of agricultural population to district population.	Percentage on agricultural population of	
			Actual workers.	Dependents.
		3	4	5
Cachar Plains	368 205	88 7	48 4	51·6
Sylhet	1 827 190	81 5	36·1	63·9
Total Surma Valley ..	2 195 395	82·6	38·2	61 8
Goalpara	385 963	83·5	42·0	58·0
Kamrup	477 736	8 ·0	50·2	49·8
Darrang	310,848	92 1	63 8	36 2
Nowgong	235,283	90·0	60 1	39·9
Sibsagar ...	544,63	91·0	63·2	36·8
Lakhimpur ..	324,651	87·4	66·2	33·8
Total Brahmaputra Valley ..	2 279, 35	87·0	57·1	42·9
Total Plains	4,474 530	84 8	47·8	52·2
Lushai Hill	76 971	93 3	56 4	43·6
North Cachar ..	20,309	49·7	53 2	46 8
Naga Hills ..	93,646	93 4	67 4	32·6
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	154,107	76 1	59 8	40·2
Garo Hills	132,233	95·6	57·5	42·5
Total Hill Districts ...	479,266	84 6	59·9	40·1
Manipur	207 175	72 8	44·6	55 4
Total Province	5,160 971	84·2	48 8	51 2

SUBSIDIARY TABLE III.

Distribution of the industrial population by natural divisions and districts—Class D

Natural divisions and districts	Population supported by industry	Percentage of industrial population to district population	Percentage on industrial population of	
			Actual workers.	Dependents
		3	4	5
Cachar Plains ..	17,408	4 2	68	31·9
Sylhet	237 555	10·6	42·9	57 1
Total Surma Valley ..	254,963	9·6	44·6	55·4
Goalpara ..	37 43	8	58 1	41·9
Kamrup ...	50,872	8·6	45 8	54 2
Darrang ...	9 607	2·8	65 6	34 4
Nowgong	8 903	3 4	69·	30 9
Sibsagar ..	19,6 8	3·3	60·3	39·7
Lakhimpur	16,550	4 5	67·1	32·9
Total Brahmaputra Valley ..	142,693	5·4	56·2	43 8
Total Plains	397 658	7·5	48·8	51 2
Lushai Hill	603	0·7	61 5	38 5
North Cachar	2 178	5·3	91 1	8 9
Naga Hills	1,034	1·0	76 8	23·2
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ..	12 108	6·0	57·6	42·4
Garo Hills	2 789	2·0	66·1	33·9
Total Hill District	18 712	3·3	64·0	36·0
Manipur	62 988	22·1	80 6	19 4
Total Province ..	479,358	7 8	53·6	46 4

Occupation

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IV

Distribution of the industrial population by natural divisions and districts (excluding Sub order 17, Provision of animal food)

Natural divisions and districts	Population supported by industry	Percentage of industrial population to district population	Percentage of industrial population of	
			Actual workers	Dependents
1	2	3	4	5
Cachar Plains	14,956	3 6	70 2	29 8
Sylhet	117,283	5 2	45 6	54 4
Total Surma Valley	132,239	5 0	48 3	51 7
Goalpara	25 306	5 5	61 9	38 1
Kamrup	36,648	6 2	41 6	58 4
Darrang	5,283	1 6	65 9	34 1
Nowgong	6 215	2 4	68 8	31 2
Sibsagar	12,031	2 0	60 4	39 6
Lakhimpur	12,368	3 3	69 2	30 8
Total Brahmaputra Valley	97,851	3 7	55 7	44 3
Total Plains	230,090	4 4	51 5	48 5
Lushai Hills	535	0 6	58 7	41 3
North Cachar	1,814	4 4	92 3	7 7
Naga Hills	727	0 7	81 2	18 8
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	10,767	5 3	58 1	41 9
Garo Hills	1,673	1 2	68 8	31 2
Total Hill Districts	15,516	2 7	64 4	35 6
Manipur	61,122	21 5	81 0	19 0
Total Province	306,728	5 0	58 0	42 0

SUBSIDIARY TABLE V

Distribution of the commercial population by natural divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts.	Population supported by commerce	Percentage of commercial population to district population	Percentage of commercial population of	
			Actual workers	Dependents
1	2	3	4	5
Cachar Plains	3,267	0 78	70 89	29 11
Sylhet	19,860	0 85	42 [illegible]	57 7[illegible]
Total Surma Valley	23 127	0 87	46 32	53 68
Goalpara	[illegible] 371	0 72	63 [illegible]	[illegible] 34
Kamrup	3,992	0 67	[illegible] 55	5[illegible]
Darrang	1 [illegible] 22	0 54	76 2[illegible]	[illegible] 37
Nowgong	1 598	0 [illegible]	67 39	[illegible] 61
Sibsagar	5,560	0 62	60 77	[illegible]
Lakhimpur	[illegible] 7[illegible]	1 27	6[illegible]	[illegible]
Total Brahmaputra Valley	21,047	[illegible]	61 [illegible]	[illegible]
Total Plains	[illegible] 7[illegible]	[illegible]	53 49	[illegible] 51
Lushai Hills	167	0 20	[illegible]	[illegible]
North Cachar	1 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 5 [illegible]	[illegible]
Naga Hills	[illegible]	[illegible]	53 [illegible]	[illegible]
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	[illegible]	[illegible]	4 [illegible] 11	[illegible]
Garo Hills	31[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 7	[illegible] 4
Total Hill Districts	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible] 4
Manipur	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 33	[illegible] 42
Total Province	47,[illegible]	[illegible] 7	54	[illegible] 74

ccupation.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VI

Distribution of the professional population by sub divisions and districts

Natural divisions and districts.	Population supported by profession.	Percentage of professional population to district population.	Percentage on professional population of	
			Actual workers.	Dependants.
1		3	4	5
Cachar Plains	3,734	0·90	47·48	52·52
Sylhet ..	44,573	1·98	34 87	65 13
Total Surma Valley	48,307	1 81	35·84	64 16
Goalpara	4,045	0·87	44·33	55·67
Kamrup	10,918	1 85	35·24	64·76
Darrang ..	1,243	0·34	39·77	60·23
Nowgong	1,8 9	0·71	41 14	58 86
Sibsagar ...	5,943	0·99	38 87	61 13
Lakhimpur	3,889	0 77	39 91	60·09
Total Brahmaputra Valley ..	27,5 7	1·05	38·56	61 44
Total Plains ..	75,824	1 43	36·83	63·17
Lu hai Hills	455	0·55	73·85	26·15
North Cachar	110	0·26	86·36	13·64
Naga Hills ..	323	0·31	41 80	58·20
Khasi and Jaintia Hills ...	2,271	1·12	39·28	60·72
Garo Hills ...	213	0 15	53·99	46·01
Total Hill Districts ...	3,372	0·39	46·65	53·35
Manipur	4,869	1·71	44·34	55·66
Total Provi co ..	84,065	1·37	37·66	62·34

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VII.

Occupation by orders 1901 and 1891

Order	Population supported in 1901	Population supported in 1891	Percentage of variation (+) or (—)
1		3	4
I Administration ...	22,622	36,421	—37·8
II. Defence ..	9,876	9,234	+ 6·9
III. Service of Native and Foreign States	2 293	489	+368·9
IV Provision a d care of animals ..	11 237	15 525	—27·4
V Agriculture	5,160,971	4,212,257	+22·5
VI. Personal, household and sanitary service ...	75,395	88,989	—15·2
VII. Food drink and stimulants ..	282, 87	376 102	—25·9
VIII. Light, firing and forage	7,449	67 842	—89·0
IX. Buildings	10,961	14,6 8	—25·0
X. Vehicles and vessels	2,202	10,994	—79·9
XI. Supplementary requirements	3,988	5,234	—23·8
XII Textile fabrics nd dress ..	79,391	81 181	— 2·2
XIII. Metals and precious stones	33,460	41,238	—18·9
XIV Glass earthen and stoneware ...	17,922	30,014	—40·2
XV Wood, cane and leaves, etc.	32,488	56,800	—42·8
XVI. Drugs, gums, dyes, etc.	1,221	2,398	—48·2
XVII. Leather ...	8,069	5,871	+37·4
XVIII. Commerce	47,906	44,711	+ 7·1
XIX. Transport and storage ..	38,591	43,682	—11·6
XX. Learned and artistic professions	84,065	102,538	—18·0
XXI. Sport	906	1,300	—30·3
XXII. Earthwork and general labour	109,815	109,837	+ 1 4
XXIII. Indefinite and disreputable occupations	1,586		
XXIV Independent	81 702	77,948	+ 4·8

Order VIII (1901).—The decrease is due to ed-pensers and sellers and oil and salt sellers having been shown in Order VII

SUBSIDIARY TABLE VIII

Occupation.

Selected occupations, 1901 and 1891

Occupations	Population supported in 1901	Population supported in 1891	Percentage of variation (+) or (—)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
36(*a*) Cultivating landholders	2,274,399	2,095,663	+ 8 52	
36(*b*) Non-cultivating landholders	52,571	66,026	— 20 37	
37(*a*) Cultivating tenants	1,740,906	1,041,520	+ 67 15	
37(*c*) Cultivators, unspecified	88,731	429,068	— 79·32	
38 Farm servants	40,215	24,352	+ 65 14	
39 Field labourers	51,961	11,145	+ 366 22	
48 Tea plantation labourers and other subordinates	623,417	441,166	+ 41 31	
78 Cow and buffalo keepers and milk and butter sellers	16,776	15,056	+ 11 42	
79 Fishermen and fish curers	77,155	201,174	— 61 64	
80 Fish dealers ...	77,552	79,583	— 2 55	
124 Grocers and general condiment dealers	21,599	32,089	— 32 69	Includes turmeric sellers, oil and salt sellers
272 Cotton weavers, hand industry	31,301	33,643	— 6 96	
275 Cotton spinners, sizers and yarn beaters	22,112	13,386	+ 65 18	
304 Piece-goods dealers	9,114	11,093	— 17 84	
306 Tailors, milliners, dress-makers and darners	8,716	7,235	+ 20 46	
317. Workers in gold, silver and precious stones	14,560	18,651	— 21 93	
336 Potters and pot and pipe-bowl makers 337 Sellers of pottery ware	11,939 5,865	29,562	— 39 77	
347 Baskets, mats, fans, screens, brooms, etc, makers and sellers	10,616	24,419	— 56 52	
392 Bankers, money lenders, etc	2,035	9,801	— 70 05	
417 Cart owners and drivers, carting agents, etc	7,015	4,158	+ 68 71	
429 Boat and bargemen	8,514	15,817	— 46 17	
444 Priests, ministers, etc	43,631	59,860	— 27 11	
447 Church, temple, burial or burning ground service, pilgrim conductors, undertakers, etc	2,436	979	+ 148 [illegible]	
456 Writers (unspecified) and private clerks	6,006	10	+ 31,9[illegible]4 21	In 1[illegible]31 writers (unspecified) fell under [illegible] sub-[illegible] 'General [illegible] clerks,' but this year they fall under 'Literature'
467 Practioners with diploma license or certificate	1,571	100	+ 1,471 00	
468 Practioners without diploma	6,070	5,848	+ 3 95	
502 Road, canal and railway labourers	31,5[illegible]3	12,9[illegible]5	+ 143 22	
504 General labour	78,146	69,048	+ 13 17	
513 Mendicancy (not in connection with a religious order)	77,288	73,664	+ 4 91	

Occupation.

SUBSIDIARY TABLE IX.

Occupations of females by orders

Order	Number of actual workers.		Percentage of females to males.
	Males.	Females.	
1		3	4
I Administration	8 777	38	0·43
II D f ce ..	6 730		
III Service of N tive and Foreign States	886	..	
IV Provision and care of animals	8 195	702	8 46
V Agricult re	1,625 135	8 33,270	34·96
VI. Personal, household and sanitary service	37 705	7,667	2 2
VII Food d ink d stim lants	86 037	52 135	60·62
VIII Light, fir g and f age	2 8 3	1 756	62 42
IX B ldings	5,156	951	18 44
X V h les and essels	915	–	
XI S ppl mentary eq irem nts	1,458	529	36 28
XII. Textil f bres and dress -	9,025	50,066	554 74
XIII. M tals and precious st es	12 309	,379	11·20
XIV Glass earthen and ton ware	5,037	4 727	93 84
XV Wood can and leaves, etc	13,165	4,687	35·60
XVI. Drugs, gums dyes, etc.	491	212	43 7
XVII. Leather	3,698	210	5·67
XVIII. Co m rce	23,333	2 663	11 4
XIX Transport and storage	24,704	582	2·36
XX. Learned and artistic professions	29,850	1 806	6 05
XXI Sport	338	72	2 3
XXII Ea thwork and g neral labo	53,209	20 188	37·94
XXIII I d fi it nd dis epotable occupation	2 7	1 141	525·80
XXIV Independent	21 972	28 673	13 49

SUBSIDIARY TABLE X.

Occupations of females by selected sub-orders and group

Sub-order or group.	Number of actual workers.		Percentage of females to males.
	Males.	Females.	
		3	4
Sub-order 10.—Landhold rs d tenants—			
36 (a) C ltivati g landholder	689,670	417 172	60·48
36 (b) Non-cultivati g landholders ..	11 568	4,448	38 45
37 ( ) C ltivati g t ants ..	548,345	93,440	7 4
37 (b) Non-cultivating tena t ..	94	301	320·21
37 ( ) Cultivators, pecified	27 296	21,679	79·42
Total S b-order 10 ..	1,276,973	539,040	42·21
Sub-order 11 —Agricult ral labourers—			
38 F rm servants ..	22,152	4 775	21 55
39. Field labourers ..	2,83	42,6 8	1,495·71
40. *Tam gy* or *jhum* cultivators	84,871	82,067	96·69
Total Sub-order 11 ..	109 873	129,470	117·83
S b-order 12.—Growers of pecial products—			
48 Tea plantations labourers and other subor dl ates.	233,098	224,396	96 26
49. Betel, vine and recea-n t growers	64	292	456·25
52. Fruit and vegetable growers	161	61	37·88
Total Sub-order 12	236,390	224,760	94·99

SUBSIDIARY TABLE X—*continued*

Occupation of females by selected sub-orders and groups

Sub-order or group	Number of actual workers		Percentage of females to males
	Males	Females	
1	2	3	4
Sub-order 14—Personal and domestic services—			
60 Barbers	4,974	63	1 26
61 Cooks	2,326	76	3 26
64. Indoor servants	15,055	4,917	32 66
65 Washermen	3,450	1,365	39 56
68 Miscellaneous and unspecified	7,242	1,187	16 39
Total Sub-order 14	36,341	7,630	20 99
Sub order 17—Provision of animal food—			
78 Cow and buffalo keepers and milk and butter sellers	7,942	1,014	12 76
79 Fishermen and fish curers	32,138	5,028	15 64
80 Fish dealers	18,879	13,273	70 30
81 Fowl and egg dealers	207	135	65 21
Total Sub-order 17	59,386	19,459	32 76
Sub-order 18—Provision of vegetable food—			
97 Grain and pulse dealers	4,048	7,862	194 21
98 Grain parchers	472	2,074	439 40
99 Makers of sugar, molasses and gur by hand	328	168	51 21
100 Oil pressers	772	236	30 56
101 Oil sellers	2,835	633	22 32
102 Rice pounders and huskers	525	10,050	2,085 71
104 Sweetmeat sellers	1,075	173	16 09
105 Vegetable and fruit sellers	529	1,410	266 54
Total Sub order 18	10,805	23,619	216 78
Sub-order 19—Provision of drink, condiments and stimulants—			
123 Cardamom, betel leaf and arecanut sellers	5,149	4,214	81 84
124 Grocers and general condiment dealers	8,558	2,282	26 66
127 Salt makers	106	361	340 56
128 Salt sellers	568	552	97 18
130 Tobacco and snuff sellers	574	375	65 33
133 Wine and spirit distillers	158	641	405 69
134 Wine and spirit sellers	333	612	183 78
Total Sub-order 19	15,746	9,077	57 64
Sub-order 30.—Silk—			
259 Silk-worm rearers and cocoon gatherers	42	36	85 71
260 Silk carders, spinners and weavers, makers of silk braid and thread	62	366	590 32
261 Sellers of raw silk, silk cloth, braid and thread	20	207	1,035 00
262 Silk dyers		29	
Total Sub-order 30	124	728	587 09

Occupation

SUBSIDIARY TABLE X—*concluded*

Occupat ons of females by selected sub-orders and groups

Sub-order or group.	Number of actual workers.		Percentage of females to males.
	Males.	Females.	
	2	3	4
Sub-order 40.—Cotton—			
271 Cotton cleaners pressers and ginners	24	2,981	12,420·83
272. Cotton weavers hand industry	1,602	23,299	1,454 56
273. Cotton spinners, frers and yarn beaters	146	18 656	12 778·08
276. Cotton yarn and thread sellers	108	269	249·07
278A. Raw cotton dealers	103	44	42·71
Total Sub-order 40	2 017	45,309	2,246·35
Sub-order 42.—Dress—			
304. Piece-goods dealers ...	3,546	1,855	52·31
306. Tailors milliners, dress-makers and darners	2,965	1 617	54 53
Total Sub-order 42	6,611	3,573	54·04
Sub-order 48.—Earthen and stoneware—			
336. Potters and pot d pipe-bowl makers	3,581	3,135	87·54
337 Sellers of pottery ware	1,408	1 59	112·99
Total S b-order 48	5 019	4,727	94 18
Sub-order 50.—Canework, matting and leaves, etc.—			
347 Baskets, mats, fans, screens, brooms etc., makers and sellers.	2,826	4,308	152 44
Total Sub-order 50	2 873	4,346	151 27
Sub-order 56.—Dealing, unspecified—			
398. Shopkeepers, otherwise unspecified	12,868	2,088	16·22
Total Sub-order 56	18,856	2,3 5	12·22
Sub-order 63.—R lgioo—			
444. Priests, ministers, etc.	14,6 9	1 115	7·57
Total Sub-order 63 ..	16 527	1 241	7·50
Sub-order 74.—Earth work, etc.—			
502. Road canal and railway labourers	22,745	4,102	18·03
Total Sub-order 74 ...	22 808	4 102	17·98
Sub-order 78.—Property and alms—			
510. House rent, hares and other property not bel g kind	50	74	148·00
511 Allowances from patrons or relatives ..	61	70	114·75
512. Educational or other endowments, scholar ships, tc.	126	7	5·55
5 3. Mendicancy (not in connection with a relig ous order)	19,514	28,448	145·78
Total Sub-order 78	19,751	28,599	144·79

SUBSIDIARY TABLE XI

Number of persons served by each actual worker in six selected professions by districts

Districts	Number of persons to every barber	Number of persons to every washerman	Number of persons to every potter	Number of persons to every priest	Number of persons to every teacher	Number of persons to every medical practitioner
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cachar Plains	855	843	1,497	542	1,316	1,965
Sylhet	769	739	957	227	1,824	2,327
Total Surma Valley	781	753	1,014	250	1,720	2,262
Goalpara	875	4,278	264	713	1,395	2,357
Kamrup	2,486	2,766	229	282	1,707	1,130
Darrang ..	3,666	2,656	864	1,629	3,152	2,375
Nowgong	3,678	3,730	864	894	2,869	3,109
Sibsagar	1,935	2,282	409	1,093	1,954	2,411
Lakhimpur	1,365	1,064	2,730	1,811	1,875	2,184
Total Brahmaputra Valley	1,735	2,319	396	657	1,900	2,091
Total Plains	1,074	1,133	572	361	1,805	2,174
Lushai Hills	6,869	6,869	13,739	639	27,478	7,494
North Cachar	868	949	40,812	3,401	2,400	2,400
Naga Hills	6,023	6,023	8,533	8,533	4,452	17,067
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	8,793	3,315	4,703	3,315	414	1,703
Garo Hills	46,091	69,137	34,568	6,011	2,514	31,568
Total Hill districts	5,550	4,193	8,578	2,388	966	6,989
Manipur	10,940	10,940	667	289	3,160	951
Total Province	1,216	1,272	630	387	1,702	2,183

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